No. 797
Friday
3 July '92

PRIVATE EYE

80p

ENGLAND'S DESPERATE CHOICE

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It was awful.

Then I'd wake up. Only I didn't, because as soon as I left the house, I'd be back in the dream again. At least it felt that way.

The Post Office, supermarkets, cinema, bus stops, traffic. My life was just one big snaking queue.

Anyway, around about New Year, I was flicking through the Sunday papers when I came across an advertisement. I can't remember exactly what it said but it was something about queuing anyway.

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By the way, I still have a recurring dream. But in this one a hunky Argentinian polo player hoists me onto his steed and whisks me off to the South of France.

I know. Too many Jilly Coopers."

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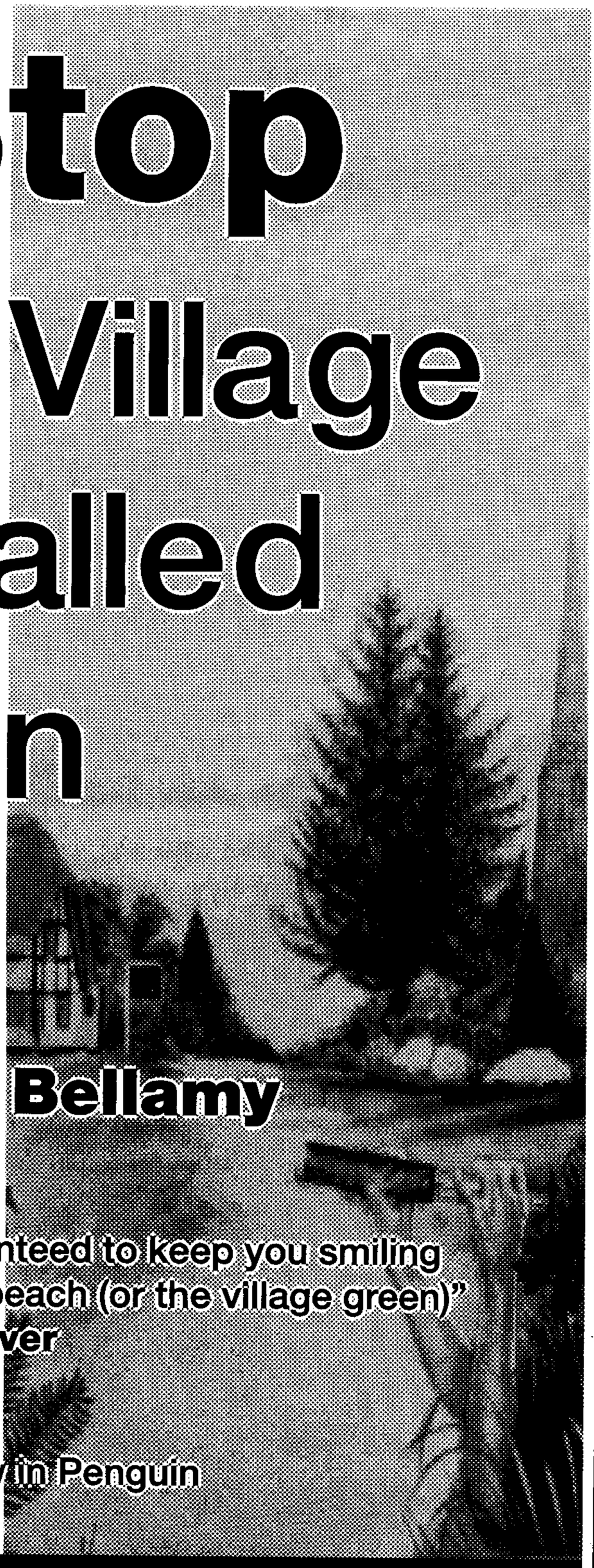

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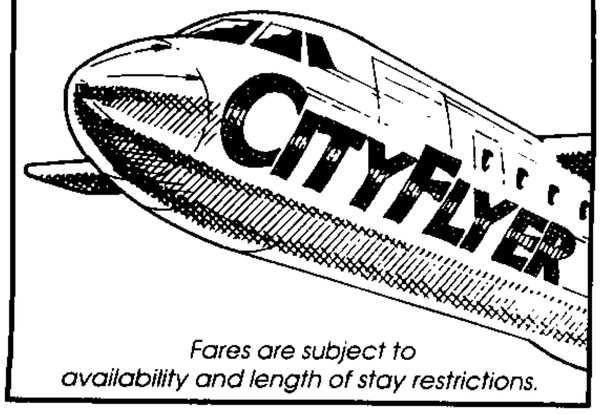

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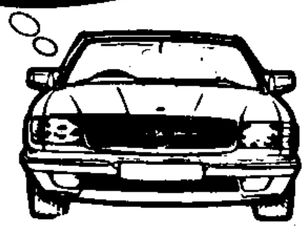
They screw me up properly in Beaconsfield



35 Minutes from the West End

HUGHES OF BEACONSFIELD

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Gnome

THIS NEWSPAPER gave its unqualified support to the government of Mr John Major in the General Election. There were those who said at the time that we were perhaps a little uncritical of the promises made by the Conservative Party in their campaign. Whatever the truth of that, we told our readers clearly that if they voted Conservative then the recession would end. A TORY VOTE MEANS A VOTE FOR RECOVERY argued one particular leader every day for a month. MAJOR BOOM ON THE WAY said the front page for another three.

However, we now have to admit that in fact the recession has not ended. The recovery has not begun. And, far from experiencing a boom, we are rapidly heading for a slump.

What does this mean? you ask. I am afraid that there is only one answer from an honest newspaper that believes in telling its readers the truth.

It means that things would have been a great deal worse under Labour.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
The Old Yew Turn
Great-Humbug-on-Tappe
Berks

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COLOUR SECTION

JUST FANCY THAT

FROM AN editorial in the *Sunday Times*, 24 June 1990:

"There is no denying, of course, that the behaviour of some tabloids has made all newspapers fair game for regulation. Never have the few unwittingly done so much damage to the reputations and freedoms of the many. The worst offenders have trampled on the weak with impunity, made gross intrusions into the private lives and assassinated the characters of public figures with no excuse of public interest or anti-social behaviour, but solely the belief that it sells newspapers. Good tabloid newspapers need to be controversial... That does not mean they have to publish sleaze, distort the truth (or, worse, print downright lies) and pander to the worst prejudices of the public. But that is exactly what some newspapers have done...

"It is unnecessarily intrusive, for example, for public figures, such as the royal family, to be subject to the never-ending scrutiny of the telephoto lens when they are doing no more than sunning themselves on a beach. Even the highest in the land should have the right to be left alone when they are doing no harm; press freedom should not override the right to privacy for no good reason."

IN THE OCEANS of space filled by stories of the fall of Robert Horton, chairman of BP, not a column inch has been found to mention Paul Gatrill, Horton's former protégé.

Gatrill's unhappy experiences as boss of BP Chemicals' property portfolio were set out in *Eye* 791. The chief result of his dynamic expansions were that BP was left at a time of recession with some 600,000 sq ft of empty, expensive office space.

But worse was to come. Gatrill's activities came to the attention of the Metropolitan police and the property whizz-kid was marched out of his office early in 1991 by security men. In France police made it clear that they wanted to interview Gatrill over the BP tower in the La Defence complex in Paris. The boss of the tower's developer and six other executives were charged with misuse of corporate assets.

Then a French police chief shot himself dead, leaving a note to the effect that the property problems caused by the BP tower "were going to blow up". Boss Horton's sudden departure from office is unlikely to be entirely irrelevant to that prediction.

ON 23 JUNE, the accounts of Ferranti showed how badly the company had been hit by the imaginative frauds of former CIA operative James Guerin.

Guerin's constant assurances about defence orders from dictators around the world convinced his pals at Ferranti and he got away with a cool £300 million or so just from his fantastic promises.

Ferranti proudly announced that £41 million of this has been recovered. Although Guerin has been prosecuted and sent to prison for 15 years, the Serious Fraud Office has "no plans" to prosecute anyone in Britain for the fraud which, apparently, was carried out solely in America and bamboozled all Ferranti's clever British executives and accountants for at least four years.

THE SERIES of reports in the *Financial Times* by reporter Bronwen Maddox under the heading THE BIG LIE: INSIDE MAXWELL'S EMPIRE **may have been an entertaining re-hash of Maxwelliana, but they failed to get two big stories: about the IMRO report criticising its own officers and Maxwell's accountants Coopers & Lybrand, and the Ernst & Young report criticising the directors of Mirror Group Newspapers.**

As for Maddox, she has shown herself to be more gullible than current form indicates. As a media analyst with Kleinwort Benson, she travelled constantly with Maxwell for two years without truly rumbling him. Even after his death, before the pensions frauds were revealed, she assured Maxwell biographer Tom Bower that Maxwell's accounts were basically sound and that Rupert Murdoch was the real villain of our times. In "The Big Lie", it was surprising what an easy ride she gave to MGN lickspittle Ernie Burrington and Maxwell Communications's finance director, Basil Brooks.

Lord Donoughue, the head of Maxwell's dodgy fund management operation, Bishopsgate International Management, came in for no criticism at all from Maddox, even though he only left the company in July 1991 after he had objected (in private) to its dubious stocklending activities.

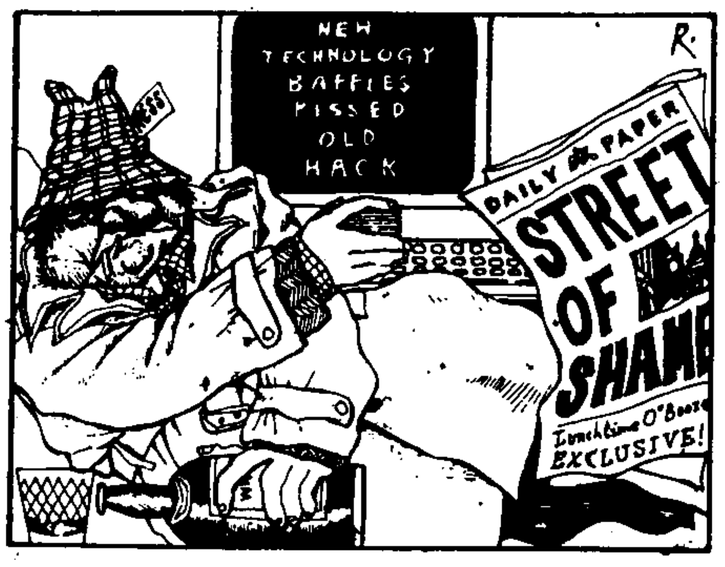
The omission of Donoughue's role may seem rather peculiar, but seems less so, perhaps, when one realises that Donoughue helped Maddox obtain her job at the *FT*.

THE disarray on the board of Mirror Group Newspapers increases almost by the minute — and key to it is the deep hostility between former *People* editor Ernest Burrington and Joe Haines, ex-*Mirror* columnist and author of a panegyric on Maxwell.

Burrington was absolutely furious when he was pushed off the board in a coup — he was at Ascot at the time. Not long afterwards, full details of Joe Haines's pay and pension arrangements (denied by Haines) appeared in the *Daily Mail*, to be followed the next day by details (which have not been denied) of pay increases paid to Burrington and to *Mirror* chief executive Vic Horwood. These increases so infuriated *Mirror* hacks that they called unanimously for the resignation of the entire board.

● *More Maxwell on page 28.*

"A week is a short time in Euro-politics"



LORD Stevens of Ludgate is no longer the proprietor of the *Express*: it was revealed last month that he has sold his shares.

Inside the Grey Lubyanka, some mutinous souls are now wondering why Stevens is still the company's chairman, given that he only got the office in the first place because of his shareholding. He has hardly won a great reputation as a media magnate, having presided over the annihilation of *Punch* and the infamous "partnership" with porn baron David Sullivan which almost killed off the *Daily Star*. Nor should we forget his role in managing pension funds for his friend Robert Maxwell — something the media are belatedly investigating.

While he remains the boss, however, his minions are taking no chances, sucking up to the diminutive tycoon as furiously as ever. Take the *Daily Express* of Friday 19 June: on page 3, a colour photo of Lady Stevens of Ludgate at Ascot; on page 38, a colour photo of Lord Stevens of Ludgate at the 50th birthday party of *Express* editor "Sir" Nick Lloyd.

The latter photo was not all it seemed. Although the *Getsmuchworse*'s photographer

Rebecca Meagher shot 10 rolls of film at Lloyd's bash, she somehow neglected to take a single picture of Lord Stevens talking to John Major. When the paper's executives discovered the omission, they feared his lordship might take offence if he were shown chatting to anyone other than the most senior guest at the party. So a scalpel was taken to another photo of the PM, which was then crudely stuck on to a picture of Lord Stevens.

That is why, although he is supposedly talking to the prime minister, Stevens's gaze is fixed elsewhere. Hence, too, the fact that Major is laughing at a joke the *Express* chairman seems to have missed.

IN RECENT months the *Grauniad*'s crime correspondent, Duncan Campbell, has written a series of exposés of corruption at Stoke Newington police station.

Imagine the rozzers' glee, then, when they were called to a fracas in Ayrsome Road, Stoke Newington, two weeks ago, and discovered that one of the men involved was a journalist called Duncan Campbell.

Without further ado they marched him off to the cells and banged him up for the night, telling him in no uncertain terms what they thought of his stories about them in the *Grauniad*.

This was unfortunate. For the man they had arrested was not the *Grauniad*'s Duncan Campbell but Duncan "Zircon" Campbell of the *New Statesman*, who is no slouch when it comes to litigation. He is now preparing to sue Inspector Knacker for wrongful arrest and much else besides.

LAST WEEK both the front and back pages of Wednesday's *Guardian* carried long pieces from Martin Walker in Washington about the newly-found "Oxford Group" of Soviet moles.

Richard Norton-Taylor, the paper's spying specialist, was none too pleased at this inflated and uncritical coverage of what was in fact a publicity stunt staged by spy-writer John Costello. He was also rather peeved that he hadn't been consulted for expert advice before the articles were printed, since Martin Walker's previous coverage of espionage has been confined to fiction (he wrote a couple of thrillers about MI6 and the CIA many years ago).

His forebodings were amply justified. In the first edition, Walker blundered into a mega-libel by claiming that a Russian spy code-named Molière had been identified as "Alex Cairncross, the British treasury official".

In fact, Sir Alexander "Alec" Cairncross, the former chief economic adviser to the treasury, has never been suspected or accused of working for Moscow. It is his brother, John, who confessed to having been a Soviet agent.

What makes the mistake all the more embarrassing is that Alec Cairncross's daughter, Frances, was herself a *Grauniad* hackette for many years.

NIGEL DEMPSTER reported last week that the guests at a polo match had included Mark Thatcher "and his fellow Old Harrovian, chat-show host Clive Anderson".

After this appeared, it was gently pointed out to Dumpster that Anderson's *alma mater* was not Harrow public school but Harrow County School for Boys. Rather than admit his mistake, the ex-GLE then tried lamely to pretend that the error was deliberate. "My joke that both Thatcher and Clive Anderson were both [*sic*] Old Harrovians has not found favour with contemporaries of the chat-show host," he wrote the following day.

This desperate self-exculpation is becoming a habit for the wretched Dumpster. Last month he enthralled *Mail* readers with a lead story announcing "Another wedding for King Hussein!" This information was presented as absolute fact. The next day, in a less prominent piece, Dumpster tried to kill his earlier story. "My revelation yesterday of Kuwaiti attempts to destabilise King Hussein..." it began, before sucking up to the Jordanian dictator. In fact, the original article had not mentioned Kuwaiti involvement.

Even this, however, cannot match Dumpster's triumph of three months ago, "revealing" that *Silence of the Lambs* would win no Oscars at all. When it swept the board, he claimed that his article had persuaded many voters in the Academy Awards to change their minds — even though the ballot had closed before his story appeared!

JOCELYN "Miss" Targett, controversial arts editor of the *Grauniad*, has encountered another setback on his strenuous climb up the greasy pole.

While away on paternity leave, he received a vituperative memo from chief arts sub, Deborah Orr, which started with the words: "I think you are a complete shite..." and continued for several pages before concluding with the equally hostile imprecation "And I hope you die..."

Naturally, this missive was brought to the attention of features editor Alan Rusbridger and deputy features editor Ian Mays, who carpeted Orr and suggested that the only honourable course open to her would be that of resignation. However, the fearsome Scots hackette refused their invitation and is continuing to work alongside the uncomfortable Targett, for whom she evidently harbours little respect.

"I WANT to draw your attention, and I expect you in turn to pass on my views to all those responsible within your department, to my concern about current standards of accuracy within the *Daily Telegraph*..."

A letter to the paper from Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells? Not at all. This is a memo to heads of department at the *Telegraph* from Max "Hitler" Hastings himself.

"Hitler" warns that the newspaper's reputation "is currently threatened, by some sloppy reporting,

"The story's spreading out of control"

sub-editing and proof-reading, which has caused us serious embarrassment... I have to assume that our standards have slipped, and that some people are not doing their job properly."

If this continues, he adds menacingly: "I am afraid that it may prove necessary to be much tougher towards those who damage the reputation of the *Daily Telegraph*."

Since no two people have damaged the *Telegraph*'s reputation more in recent years than its oikish deputy editor Charles Moore and its ridiculous proprietor Conrad Black, we trust Hastings will be evicting the pair of them from Canary Wharf forthwith.

ELEVATED to chief executive, Donald "Pixie" Trelford is now presiding over the last days of the *Observer* as its sales sink to the appalling level of 511,000 and a desperate round of bloodletting attempts to reduce the editorial budget (there have been no redundancies among the supernumerary executives).

The recent staff meeting addressed by Pixie was an all-ticket event, with hacks having to hand in their personalised invitations at the boardroom door. After Trelford's "morale-boosting" speech, doughty veteran Alan Watkins led the attack by dismissing the paper's front-page stories as "flam". This stung executive editor Adam Raphael, who spoke up for Pixie and himself.

Jonathan Mirsky, the award-winning foreign correspondent who covered Tiananmen Square, stood alone before the Trelford/Raphael tanks. The atmosphere, he explained, reminded him of Tiananmen Square, when everyone was afraid to speak out and nobody knew who would be shot next. He even compared Trelford to Lee Pung, the Chinese leader who ordered the massacre of the students. Trelford pointed out that he had not yet actually murdered any students, but appeared visibly shaken by Mirsky's dissent.

Meanwhile, 29-year-old pussy-man Simon Kelner, editor designate of the *Observer Magazine*, is becoming increasingly paranoid about leaks to the *Eye* and was seen accusing columnist Simon Hoggart of passing on stories, jabbing his finger at him and exclaiming "Your card's been marked."

In recent days a rumour had got about that the paper's pisspoor political correspondent, Nick Wapshott, was on story strike in support of colleagues facing the sack, but in fact he was simply being spiked at every opportunity by home news editor Paul Routledge and assistant editor Dave Randall. Nobody on the paper apart from Trelford approved of his appointment back in 1989 and he has at last been sacrificed, allowing him to spend more time with his wife Louise and to write some more showbusiness biographies for remaindering.

FOR YEARS the Government and ministry of defence have argued that ministry work in the south of England should be relocated to the north to help ease the area's heavier unemployment.

Some consternation, then, has followed the news that MoD work in Harrogate (oop north) is to be relocated to RAF Wyton, Cambridgeshire (down south), thus removing 1,500 jobs from heavily unemployed Yorkshire.

The "costing document" justifying the move has been condemned on all sides of the House of Commons, and no one can work out quite why this move is supported by the Government. The only thing on which everyone agrees is that it has nothing to do with the fact that a lot of new jobs will be created in Huntingdon, the constituency of nice Mr Major.

THE *Grauniad* had someting of a scoop on 12 June concerning the Labour Party's defeat in the general election.

It revealed, days ahead of anyone else, that the party was to be given a confidential report from its director of communications, Dave Hill, saying that Labour lost the election because it had not abandoned *enough* of its principles.

The *Grauniad* did not say that the news had reached it in a plain envelope from an anonymous source. And nor did the publication of the leak provoke cries of outrage from Mr Hill and demands that the mole be found and driven out of Walworth Road.

Oddly enough, Mr Hill was seen at approximately 2.30pm two days before the leak was printed, walking up Farringdon Road and turning into No 119, the *Grauniad* office. This was no doubt a pure coincidence.

TIM EGGAR, energy minister, has recognised the irresistible force of *Private Eye* and announced that the committee of experts considering renewable energy is to resume work.

The group of leading scientists was set up by Colin Moynihan when he was energy minister; and some influential people had hoped the committee would be liquidated along with Moynihan, who lost his at the general election.

Following regular reminders from the *Eye*, the decision has at last been taken to resuscitate the group, and it was announced in a softly, softly written reply to an arranged question. Eggar has not felt able to surrender graciously and appoint himself chairman, the post previously filled by Moynihan. That job has gone to a scientist, Dr Martin Holdgate, who has often worked for the Government.

The other embarrassment the Government wanted to see disappear into thin air, the select committee on energy, is still refusing to vanish and 80 MPs have now signed the motion demanding that it be reconstituted. Members of a multi-party fighting group, led by Tory Michael Clarke, the outgoing committee chairman, were due to see Michael Heseltine, who as president of the Board of Trade is overlord of energy.

***EYE* revelations of Roy Hattersley's plan to leave Birmingham Sparkbrook and be elevated to the House of Lords have left his neatly-planned succession in disarray.**

His constituency executive committee called an emergency meeting on 9 June and ordered Fattersley to appear before its general committee. The move exposed the delicate manoeuvring aimed at placing Najma Hafeez, the grossly over-ambitious city councillor and social services chairwoman, into Hattersley's oversized seat.

Hafeez, readers will recall, was one of the candidates opposing Roger Godsiff in Small Heath. She lost — but not before a letter emerged from social service's director Adrianne Jones to urban renewal boss David Bowman ordering thousands of pounds of damp-coursing and other improvements to be done at the house of Raja Khan for "health reasons". Coincidentally, Mr Khan controlled a huge block vote in Small Heath.

Hafeez's husband is the city council Labour group secretary Albert Bore, right-hand man to council leader Sir "Dick" Knowles. He in turn is Hattersley's agent and close chum. While Sparkbrook has been collectively appalled at the prospect of Hafeez, so far there is a dearth of opponents. The main contender is Erica Barnett, the bizarre left-wing daughter of Lord Joel Barnett. Her attempts to turn Sparkbrook into a stronghold of Marxism recently saw her thrown off several committees.

WHILE the membership of the People's Party continues to fall nationally, the Bethnal Green constituency party seems set for massive expansion.

Cynical and uninformed voices suggest this is in some way linked to the forthcoming contest to find a replacement for ageing Eurosceptic and local MP, Peter Shore.

Leading the charge to replace the veteran MP is Rajan Jalal. This Wapping councillor only narrowly failed to win more votes among local party members in an unsuccessful attempt to deselect Mr Shore before the last election.

Councillor Jalal's local recruitment record is unsurpassed. Immediately prior to the 1990 council elections, Labour membership among the Bangladeshi community in the St Katherine's ward rose sharply. By pure coincidence, in a free vote, the ward membership ditched three long-serving white Labour councillors and replaced them with three candidates originating from the sub-continent, among them Mr Jalal.

Walworth Road has so far declined to investigate this or any other Bethnal Green recruitment campaign. Suggestions that the oversight is because Mr Jalal's only rival is poll tax refusenik and open Militant supporter Councillor Phil Maxwell (no relation) are entirely without foundation.

'Backbiter'

THE NEW GIRLS (3)

Lady Olga Maitland

THE NEW Conservative MP for Sutton and Cheam, Lady Olga Maitland, 48, is already one of the noisiest of the new intake, though hers is a noise that signifies nothing.

Invariably bedecked in a Chanel suit, she is one of the few toffs to be elected this time round in Mr Major's new classless party. For all her aristocratic confidence and experience of the Street of Shame, she has been slow to develop political nous. No sooner had she arrived than she had put her name to an early-day motion expressing discontent over the Government's pro-Maastricht line. But she showed that she was made of weaker stuff than her father who, as a Conservative MP committed to the imperialist cause, had resigned the party whip for a year after British troops were withdrawn from Suez. The whips browbeat Lady Olga into removing her signature a day later.

She is the daughter of the 17th Earl of Lauderdale, Patrick Maitland, who served during the first three years of World War II as a foreign correspondent for the *Times* and *News Chronicle* in the Balkans, Washington, and the Pacific, and during the second part as a foreign office civil servant. He married a Yugoslav wife, hence his daughter's exotic first name, and during the 1950s sat as a Tory MP until he inherited his title from a cousin.

Lady Olga herself married a barrister, Robin Hay, who lists "church tasting" among his recreations. This chimes in nicely with her father's interest in church matters — he belongs to the High Anglican cult of Our Lady of Walsingham. The Earl of Lauderdale refers to his redoubtable daughter as "old boy".

Lady Olga's early career in journalism consisted of a spell as a trainee reporter at the Fleet Street News Agency, where she covered the law courts and acquired a reputation for speed of shorthand, and at the *Blackheath and District Reporter*. Thereafter, she worked as a secretary at the British embassy in Mexico City and later joined Peter McKay on the Town Talk column of the *Sunday Express*.

Editor Sir Jonah Junor took a shine to her and eventually gave her a gossip column of her own, in which she ran bland items about her friends and affected to be on intimate terms with members of the royal family. She earned her nickname of "fragrant hackette" as a result of being wheeled into Langan's on a dessert trolley after a boozy lunch.

Lady Olga has always been a keen Tory activist, starting with Chelsea Young Conservatives in the 1960s, the Bow Group in the 1970s, and the local association in the area where she lives, Islington South and Finsbury. In 1983, when she was seeking sponsors for her application to become an official Conservative candidate, she approached the then industry minister Norman Lamont. They lunched together and within days her brand of bossy charm had worked its magic. Late one night, Lamont turned up at her Islington abode demanding entry. Her barrister husband was away on a case and Lamont was so tired and emotional that he slept the night on the sofa. Another MP who has sought to inveigle his way into her affections was Labour's Brian Sedgemore, who invited her to stay with him at a cottage in Wales.

Also in 1983, she founded a pressure group called Familes for Defence, organised along Women's Institute lines and intended as a riposte to CND in general and the Greenham Common wimmin in particular. It gained the nickname of Women for War and Lady Olga was able to demonstrate commitment and improve her public speaking skills at engagements up and down the country. Some of its efforts, such as the hymn-singing protests outside the Soviet embassy in Notting Hill, were regarded with wry amusement.

Women for War, like all such pressure groups, relied on donations from wealthy individuals and one of those who extended a helping hand was a dubious figure called "Lord Douglas McDillon". In return for his financial support, Lady Olga obliged by peppering her column with references to the ludicrous McDillon. A man of Brazilian/American background who purchased his baronial title, McDillon has since been exposed as a fraud and a cheat, like so many contributors to Conservative funds. He ended up bouncing cheques on the party and is now a bankrupt.

Following the departure of Junor, Lady Olga was sacked from the *Sunday Express* by his deputy, Hugh McCrory. She was thus able to spend more time with her Families for Defence, although its purpose was swiftly undermined by developments in the Soviet Union.

Since her arrival at the Commons House, she has put herself up for official positions on two backbench committees. Unfortunately, her parliamentary colleagues, who have yet to be persuaded of her talents, voted for other, less well-known MPs instead.

Apology: Angela Eagle MP and Joyce Gould

IN THIS column in our last issue we said correctly that Joyce Gould, who is director of organisation for the Labour Party, sat on the panel which decided to include Angela Eagle on the shortlist for selection as Labour parliamentary candidate for Wallasey. Quite incorrectly, however, we stated that Ms Gould is the aunt of Ms Eagle and that the voters were not informed of this relevant fact. Obviously, the inference which readers must have drawn was that Ms Gould had favoured Ms Eagle because of their family relationship and that Ms Eagle had obtained her place on the shortlist as a result of nepotism.

We now know that Ms Gould and Ms Eagle are not related at all and that our speculations as to what might have resulted from their relationship had no basis whatsoever.

We therefore withdraw totally any suggestion that Ms Gould acted improperly in any way in her membership of the shortlisting panel. Likewise, we withdraw any suggestion that Ms Eagle was party to any deception or impropriety in relation to shortlisting or selection as candidate for Wallasey. We also mistakenly claimed that Ms Gould had served as a regional organiser for the Labour Party in the north of England.

We apologise to Ms Gould and Ms Eagle for these errors.

Grovel

LADY THATCHER will be mortified to hear that her old chum Caspar Weinberger is to be charged by the Iran-Contra prosecutor.

Caspar was a special favourite of Lady Thatch, and in 1988 on her personal recommendation he was awarded the Grand Cross of the British Empire, a very rare gift indeed for a foreigner, particularly a partisan foreign politician.

Weinberger was one of many senior executives of the construction combine Bechtel who joined the administration of Ronald Reagan (another was former secretary of state George Schultz), and soon after he became defence secretary played a crucial role in covering up the saga of the Korean airliner 007 which was shot down in Russian airspace in 1983.

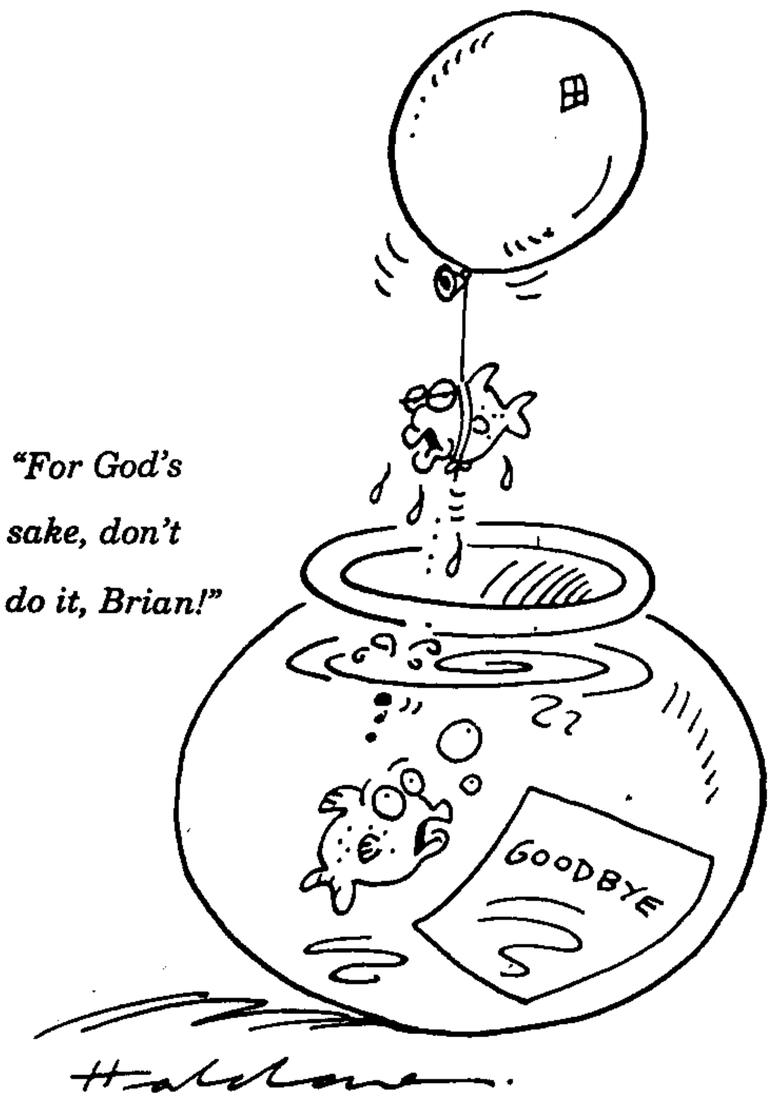
Not everyone in this country agreed with his gong; but Weinburger did have one other good friend here apart from the prime minister. The *Daily Mirror* printed a special leading article congratulating him on his award and described him as a good friend of Britain. The article had been specially ordered by the much respected Robert Maxwell.

MORE evidence reaches me of the suitability of Kelvin McKenzie to edit a fine national newspaper.

The day before Freddie Mercury died of Aids, the *Sun* editor suffered a hefty loss on the horses; but at the moment of Mercury's death was apparently struck by a brainwave. "I reckon that bleedin' Bohemian Rhapsody'll go straight to Number One," he spluttered.

Ever quick to latch on to a trend, McKenzie ordered his dismal pop columnist Piers Morgan to start puffing said hit by the old Queen. (*Shurely 'Puffing said old hit by Queen'? Ed.*)

Morgan, fancying a flutter on the prospect, was surprised when he rang up bookmakers William Hill to learn that Kelvin had already put a £10,000 bet on the outcome.



"For God's sake, don't do it, Brian!"

Pseuds Corner

I suspect that the little song [*Yesterday*] continues to move us, after more than a quarter of a century, because it enacts how being lost is part of the painful process of growing up. He believes in yesterday as we all tend to, because then love seemed "an easy game to play". Now he needs "a place to hide away" from the shadow; and with the words "Oh yesterday came suddenly" the sense is inverted since yesterday becomes the recognition, even the acceptance of the shadow — a moment of truth. Negatively, one can attribute this to the slack syntax which the Beatles share with all pop lyricists; positively, one may regard it as an example of a pre-syntactical oral poetry, in which emotional ambivalence becomes the prerogative not merely of high talent, but of a small flame of genius.

WILFRID MELLERS
Independent on Sunday

When I met David [Hemmings] I was still in manuscript form. Then I was married eight years and all those other things happened and it was like being edited. Now I am well punctuated. We have journeyed and now I feel like we have both come home. It's all about coincidences, isn't it? Coincidences are God's way of remaining anonymous."

"My God, Tessa [Dahl]," said David, "is that yours? What a wonderful line. You are fantastic."

Daily Mail

Before the IRA bomb, the GMW's Commercial Union tower was dignified; after it, beautiful.

Pre-bomb, the building was, like its Miesian models, about expressing passion as refinement. It had a ballet dancer's elegance, achieved through compressing the physicality of the building, its complex inner life, and the creative ambitions of its makers, into an image of perfection. For dancers' feet, such grace has its cost in blisters and binding and, at least for Mies, it required a similar painful squeezing of humanity — his own, and that of his building's users. To switch metaphors, the CU tower had the same contained, shiny exterior one imagines a plastic explosive has, and the same latent power.

In exploding the latter the IRA detonated, in the former, everything that had been compressed. It was as if Coop Himmelblau had rearranged an old experiment of theirs, in which a sequence of explosions were triggered by the human heartbeat, inside the offices of Commercial Union, and using their employees.

ROWAN MOORE
Blueprint

I was recently with the wonderful Joseph Corvo, whose *Zone Therapy* works on the veins. I told him about my heart and, as he is also a healer, he put his hand on it and prayed. Suddenly he said, "It is a miracle!" He was looking at my bare arms. He went on: "You are 90 but your arms are the soft, white arms of a girl of 18, and where are your lines?" I had always had them between my shoulder and my elbow, and now they had all gone. When I returned home I looked at my body, and found it was the same — very white and without a single line of any sort. In fact, it was exactly the same as when I was young.

BARBARA CARTLAND
The Oldie

CONTRIBUTORS: D. Ottewell, Mary Mullins, Roger Willis, R.T. Harker.

£10 paid for entries

"Oh my God, Frankenstein – you've created Michael Jackson!"

● *I AM DELIGHTED to see that the Curse of Gnome has struck at the Sunday Mirror, which recently ran an Arslikhan piece about Lisa-Marie Presley, daughter of Elvis.*

Readers with keen memories may have been perplexed because only a year ago the same paper published an unflattering article about her by obese freelance hack Noel Botham, the correspondent for the National Enquirer who sued the Eye over our reporting of the matter.

Lisa-Marie Presley sued the Sunday Mirror for libel and the case was settled on the basis that the rag paid her around $200,000 in damages and agreed to publish a positive article as a "correction".

MY circumferentially challenged friend, Michael VerMeulen, editor of men's magazine *GQ*, tells me that he was a social success at the recent rainforest ball. "Naomi Campbell and Gianni Versace laughed at all my jokes... I think Gianni found it to be a life-enhancing experience."

Meanwhile staff at *GQ* were amused to meet Michael's sister Ann for the first time when she was on holiday from America. "I'm glad I'm Michael's sister," she explained, "and I didn't meet him in a bar."

Pip Pip!

O·B·N

IN days of yore every fair lady could count on her knight to spring to her defence.

Will nobody, I thought, come forward to champion our own sweet young princess in her hour of need; is nobody brave enough?

Then Sir Peregrine [Worsthorne] rose up and smote a crashing blow with his broadsword, felling the villain to the ground.

A very "parfit, gentle knight" indeed.

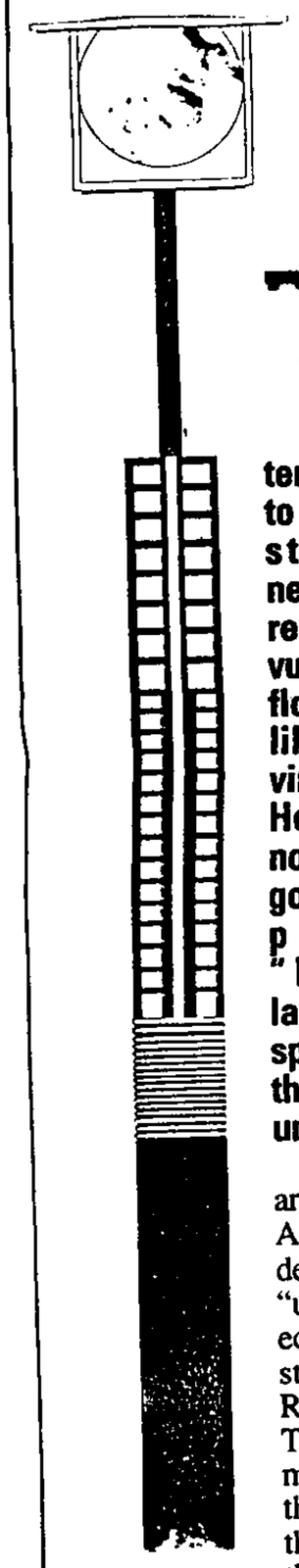
Margaret Sharpe
Guildford, Surrey

Letter in Sunday Telegraph

Submitted by Tim Franks.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

NOOKS AND CORNERS



THE heritage industry spawns its own detritus which is often more damaging to our heritage than straightforward neglect and decay: redundant notices, vulgar street paving, flower tubs and the like. A particularly virulent outbreak of Heritage Disease now infects Glasgow, where preposterous "Mockintosh" lamp-standards are springing up in the streets like unwanted triffids.

Sometimes things are best left well alone. A few years back a student discovered some "unknown" and unexecuted designs for lamp standards by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. These were probably made around 1918-20, that is, some years after the old soak had shaken the dust of Glasgow off his feet and over a decade after he had completed his best buildings in the city.

Unfortunately, the drawings came to the attention of Alex MacGregor, chief planning officer in charge of the heritage section of Strathclyde regional council's physical planning department, who thought it would be fun to realise the designs as the region's contribution to Glasgow's European City of Culture Year, 1990.

And so it was done — with large sums of public money better spent on restoring authentic historic buildings. Some 15ft high and necessarily-modified, these gratuitous objects were first plonked outside Mackintosh's famous Hill House in Helensburgh. And then the roads department got carried away. Although neither the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society nor the School of Art really wanted them, more of the wretched things appeared outside Mackintosh's masterpiece in Renfrew Street, and elsewhere.

At the School of Art they have been crudely erected slap up against the walls without any thought for the architecture of the building: they look ridiculous, and are damaging. Worse, versions of another design have appeared in the city's finest piece of classical urban planning, Exchange Place, where there is not a Toshie building in sight. At least here the district council objected, and there is to be a public inquiry to get these triffids exterminated.

But the roads department is powerful and usually does what it pleases. Normally Strathclyde regional council is busy trying to smash more urban motorways through innocent parts of the city, so perhaps Mockintosh heritage lamps are a small thing to moan about. But they are symptomatic of a widespread disease and another good reason why the regional council should be abolished.

AN ACT which resulted in the disappearance of one of these heritage lamps might be described as "constructive vandalism", but in fact this is a new term for the process by which the owners of unlet commercial buildings try to avoid paying rates.

It helps to know your enemy; and the enemy, in the form of Keith Wooldridge, "a director of architects/QS/project managers Kenzie Lovell", has recently obliged us by publishing an interesting article on this subject, in the 6 June issue of Estates Gazette.

"We are assisting a number of clients to render their office buildings unfit for occupation. This is not an attempt to ensure that there is a continuing workload of new buildings to design so much as an exercise in helping them to achieve exemption from the 50 percent unoccupied property rate... The aspects that must be addressed include, but are not necessarily confined to, the following: the removal of heating and/or air-conditioning equipment on individual floors including pipes and ductwork, removal of floor-coverings, raised flooring, underfloor trunking and wiring for small power and telecoms; removal of lightweight or demountable partitioning; removal or destruction in situ of sanitary ware..."

Now, I might have a little sympathy for property developers paying rates on empty buildings in a time of recession if I did not reflect that the absence of any financial penalty might encourage them to litter London with even more unlet, unwanted and unlovely surplus office blocks. And then Mr Wooldridge goes on to tell us that: "Certain buildings are automatically exempt, for example if they are listed — not that it is suggested that encouraging the listing of a building merely to obtain exemption is a sensible course."

Of course not! "On the contrary, in the current climate many owners with established permissions are taking a route previously considered risky and seeking a certificate of immunity from listing to obtain a breathing space." And we know how sympathetic the DoE tends to be to that.

The egregious Mr Wooldridge concludes: "There is one final factor to consider — the client's market image. The public might well be surprised and not a little perturbed to learn that a number of empty buildings which have windows cleaned and external planting boxes carefully watered and groomed have been constructively vandalised internally to avoid the payment of rates!"

Quite so. Would you buy a secondhand car from this man? The Westminster chamber of commerce clearly would: it has made him chairman of its building and property group.

'Piloti'

THE WORLD OF MAGAZINES

WHEN Vicki Woods was appointed to edit *Harpers & Queen* last autumn, Terry Mansfield, National Magazine Company's MD, introduced her as the person to take sales through the 100,000 barrier. Alas, the figures have since plummeted and morale at the mag has followed suit as Woods's nerves have begun to fray.

Temper tantrums are now commonplace, but many were shocked when Woods went up to a veteran lay-out man and for no apparent reason exclaimed: "Shit, bugger, bastard!... I dreamt about you last night... Shit, bugger, bastard!"

In desperation, Woods recently rang Paul Palmer, deputy editor of *Tatler* and an old colleague from *Daily Mail* days, and poured her heart out. She was without a deputy editor, a features editor, a health editor and a beauty editor, she explained, and was at the end of her tether. Palmer immediately told *Tatler* editor Jane Procter and Condé Nast's UK supremo Nicholas Coleridge, who were delighted to hear of her discomfiture since they intend that *Tatler*'s sales should overtake those of *Harpers* within six months.

Now it has been announced that Jennifer's Diary writer Sue Crewe has resigned after less than a year in the job so she can spend more time with her family. And sleazy hackette Lucretia Stewart is ready to step into Lucinda Bredin's shoes as deputy editor. (Interestingly, Bredin's husband, Studley Bruce Palling, reviewed La Stewart's pisspoor travel book about south-east Asia, *Tiger Balm*, for the *Evening Standard*, describing its author as a "middle-aged London literary socialite" and scourging her for being more interested in her own sexual fantasies than the condition of the Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian peoples.)

La Stewart has sent Woods a postcard saying that the Seventh Cavalry are on their way. However, *Harpers* staff are up in arms at the prospect of her arrival. Mary Killen has expressed her disapproval and the mild-mannered chief sub Richard Preston has made representations to Woods on behalf of the staff in general. There is every prospect that the *Harpers* office will soon resemble the Marie Celeste as all those whose contracts allow them to do so will be working from home in future. Perhaps they have heard the legendary *bon mot* of one of La Stewart's former lovers, Nicholas Ward-Jackson: "Getting into bed with Lucretia is like getting into bed with a tarantula."

HACKS at the *Sunday Express* magazine are reeling from the attentions of Eve Pollard's Bacardi-swilling deputy, Craig Mackenzie, aka "the Bouncing Bog Brush".

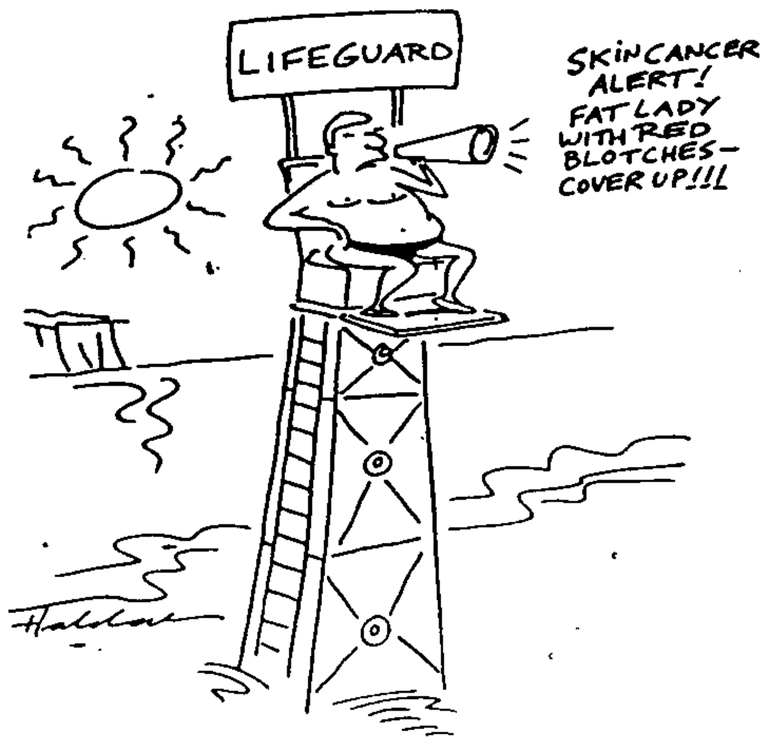
Two weeks ago La Bollard rang him on her car-phone and complained that the mag's staff were "not working hard enough". (Milady herself, it should he noted, was on the way to Ascot at the time. After a strenuous week at the racecourse she then jetted off to France for a freebie holiday at the luxury Colombe D'Or hotel, which coincidentally had featured over four pages of the 24 May issue of the *Sunday Express*.)

The ever-obedient Mackenzie immediately summoned a meeting of heads of department to find out "what's wrong with this magazine". The culprit turned out to be the headlines, which, according to Mackenzie, were "full of clichés".

"Caine and Able", headline for a Michael Caine article, was "complete crap, a total cliché". On the other hand, the headline for a feature on Sharon Stone — "Precious Stone" — was pronounced "brilliant". "We need to create clichés for the next generation," Mackenzie told puzzled staff.

The other thing which Mackenzie and Bollard want to see more of in the mag is "sexy" pictures of celebrities. Hence last Sunday's charming shot of Jamie Lee Curtis, legs akimbo. Next Sunday there will be a photo of Sharon "Precious" Stone — again with her legs open. The picture originally chosen by art editor Tom Reynolds, of Stone's face, was deemed "wrong". Now Bollard and Mackenzie are eagerly seeking a Helmut Newton shot of teenage actress Jane March baring her breasts.

FACT: When Eve Pollard moved from the *Sunday Mirror* to the *Sunday Express* last year she said she was glad she "wouldn't have to print sleaze any more".



EYE TV

EastEnders

(BBC 1)

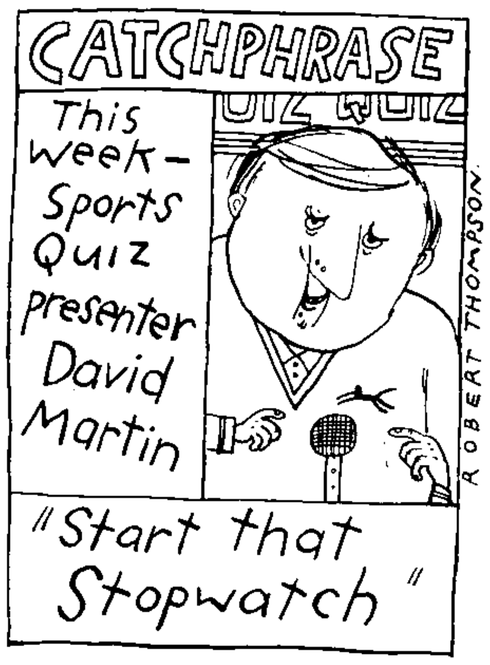
AND SO Gill finally snuffed it. British television's first official Aids death took place on Thursday 25 June at 7.39pm, witnessed by millions of gripped viewers.

White of face but serene of mind, Mark's young wife gulped, smiled, whispered: "It was great fun, wasn't it?" and then quietly passed away. It was the sort of television that makes you want to go and do something really cheerful, like stick your fingers in a light socket.

Back in Walford, of course, it was a day like any other — Death stalks this beleaguered borough so regularly that it probably has its own tab at the Queen Vic. Aids is but the latest "issue" to assail the unfortunate residents of Albert Square, who must live in fear of their careers every time a new and unbelievably depressing storyline appears on the horizon. Who will be written out this time? Will they be raped? Shot in cold blood? Eaten alive by ravening wolves? No wonder Arthur always looks worried.

It's just a shame that these "issues" play such havoc with the normal processes of drama — things like momentum, tension, entertainment. In many ways, issues have become the prevailing curse of the British soap, imposing themselves on plotlines and on characters who then have to behave as the issue needs them to behave. The most blatant example of this in *EastEnders* was Wilmott-Brown, a harmless enough ex-army type with a fruity accent who was suddenly transformed into a mad rapist when someone decided it was time to "tackle" rape.

Similarly, the revelation some time ago that Mark Fowler had contracted HIV has had far-reaching consequences. Over what now seems like years, each regular character has been told of the infection, with the adverse reaction of Mark's father Arthur alone lasting many months. Whole episodes were dedicated to Arthur's inability to accept the news — shots of Arthur in his shed, scowling; shots of Arthur in his armchair, scowling; shots of Pauline making a cup of tea while Arthur stomped off to the pub, scowling. The patience of viewers was stretched to its very limit; some even considered turning to *Brookside* for light relief, a step unimaginable in any other circumstances. Something had to happen: the issue was overwhelming the whole programme.



Nonetheless, Gill's final week saw the programme dredge new lows of gloom and despondency. We had the "There's so much I haven't done" speech. We had the "It's terrible when you have to feel guilty about being alive speech". And, worst of all, we had the wedding, which added toecurling mawkish sentimentality to the brew. On Tuesday, Mark surprised everyone who hadn't read that day's paper by proposing to Gill, and swiftly marrying her in Walford registry office. Everyone rallied round. Dining at nearby hotel, Gill didn't feel hungry but felt she could manage an ice-cream. Unprompted, the waiter brought them all ice-creams, each impaled with a fizzing sparkler. Viewers wondered whether to vomit with embarrassment or just throw themselves out of the window and be done with it.

When it finally came, though, the end was both well observed and touching, showing once again how skilfully written and acted *EastEnders* can be at its best. And yet the issue was still there, hovering didactically in the background and restraining all suspension of disbelief. At the crunch, you knew that Gill was not really a character at all, but a fictional device designed to make us think more about HIV and Aids. The whole production was soothingly, immaculately correct (the Terrence Higgins Trust was in constant attendance). Even Arthur behaved himself.

Which is why I suspect that, despite the worst trails since television was invented, many soap fans are secretly looking forward to *Eldorado*, the BBC's new glossy thrice-weekly series about expats in Spain. No issues, no sense of social responsibility — just loads of rich people sleeping with each other and behaving badly. As Albert Square falls prey in the coming months to broken relationships, murderous joyriders and plagues of killer bees, a little light relief may be just what we need.

'Couch Potato'

MEDIA NEWS

RUCTIONS continue at the BBC's new "government friendly" *Panorama* **(see** *Eyes passim***). Glenwyn Benson, the fanatical Birtite editor of the once respected programme, has made two senior appointments without bothering to go through the "formalities" of advertising the posts or interviewing any candidates.**

The lucky beneficiaries of this extraordinary step are Nick Robinson — the "boy wonder" from the staff of *On the Record* — and Harry Dean, elevated from *Public Eye*.

Such blatant disregard for procedure was also evidenced in the recent selection of Peter Horrocks, the editor of the BBC's election night coverage, as editor of *Public Eye*. The interview board scheduled to pick an appointee from the shortlist was cancelled and Horrocks was given the job without further ado.

All of this is only going to add to the angst of beleaguered staff at *Panorama*. Their morale may not be improved by the news that in response to the show's plummeting ratings an architect has been appointed to redesign the studio and a part-time "consultant" has been drafted in from Birt's old stamping ground at LWT.

It is always heartening to see the media report on itself in a disinterested and unbiased way, which explains why *The Late Show***'s recent PR puff for the new black paper** *The Journal* **was such depressing viewing.**

The Journal — a weekly aimed at ethnic yuppies — is owned by wealthy black publisher Val McCalla and put together on a shoe string by three staff. It is widely seen as a "spoiler" aimed at driving another new black paper — *Black Briton* — out of business.

McCalla apparently hates *BB*'s publisher, an ex-employee of his called Joe Harker, so much that he is willing to pour money into a loss making new product just to drive Harker into bankruptcy.

Needless to say none of this background made it into *The Late Show*'s sycophantic report of how *The Journal* was "breaking new ground" by appealing to advertisers who wanted to reach an affluent black market. The *Late Show*'s David Upshal went to extraordinary lengths to tilt the balance against Harker, even using low camera angles to make him loom threateningly over the viewer.

Surely this couldn't be the same David Upshal who used to be a staffer on McCalla's other publication, *The Voice*, and has recently been commissioned to write a number of articles for that very paper?

IAN HAY DAVISON, chief executive of the Lloyd's insurance market from 1983 to 1986, made a particularly smug and self-satisfied appearance on *Question Time* recently.

In presenting himself too self-importantly as a heroic crusader against financial wrong-doing, he has unfortunately reminded some viewers of less heroic episodes in his past.

Although he said on the programme that he had always known Robert Maxwell to be unreliable and suggested scornfully that some in the City had been foolish to trust him, Hay Davison himself was not invariably helpful to journalists investigating Lloyd's.

True, he gave background briefings to journalists about the suspicious antics of Peter Miller, then chairman of Lloyd's, but on one occasion he also stifled criticism of Miller. When Tom Bower produced a programme about City corruption for *Panorama* in 1985, he got reporter Will Hutton to interview Miller. Miller was asked about his membership of a baby (ie insiders') syndicate, and when asked whether it was hard to find working members to police the market who didn't themselves have a vested interest, made the following smug reply: "Isn't that the very heart of self-regulation?"

Although Hay Davison had been brought into Lloyd's to clean out the Augean stable and strongly disapproved of baby syndicates, he was anxious to avoid bad publicity for the market and so brought pressure to bear on the BBC's feeble head of current affairs, Peter Pagnamenta, to remove the Miller interview.

The embarrassing interview was never broadcast and Bower left *Panorama* soon afterwards. Whenever Bower has since encountered him, Hay Davison has told Bower the BBC were fools to withdraw the interview.

PS: When Hay-Davison obtained his recent injunction against *Private Eye*, obliging us to recall copies of the magazine from wholesalers and big retailers over an error for which we had immediately agreed to apologise, he retained the services of the lawyer Peter Carter-Fuck. Hay Davison's daughter, Charlotte Watson, is a partner at Carter-Fuck's firm.

HACKWATCH No 25: Frank Johnson

A DECADE AGO, Frank Johnson was the funniest writer in Fleet Street. His parliamentary sketches in *The Times* won him a Columnist of the Year award; the judges called his column a "daily delight".

Alas, he grew weary of being thought a "mere" entertainer. He became a foreign correspondent, first in Paris and then in Bonn. The experiment was not a success.

Moving to the *Sunday Telegraph*, Johnson had his second brilliant interlude, this time as the anonymous author of the Mandrake gossip column. From his perch at the bar of the Garrick Club, he picked up a string of political scoops that were plagiarised by other diary columns. Each Christmas, for instance, he would reveal precisely who had been invited to spend the festive season with Thatch at Chequers and where they were seated at Boxing Day lunch — a useful indicator of who was in favour with the Leaderene.

Alas, once again he came over all pompous. Being a gossip columnist was apparently too vulgar a calling; he decided that political punditry was a more seemly occupation for *un homme serieux* such as himself.

Again, the experiment has not been a success. Johnson's opinions are narrowly Thatcherite and his political analysis is invariably trite. Worse, he has an autodidact's compulsion to flaunt his "learning": having read one or two books on 19th and 20th century history, he feels obliged to parade this achievement at every opportunity. Witness his *Sunday Telegraph* columns from the past six months:

19 January: On the Ango-Irish Agreement. Mentions the Balkans, World War I, the IRA, Bonar Law, F.E. Smith, Alexander Kerensky, the ERM, Lenin. ("I apologise for the excessive number of names in this column. But world events are full of them.")

26 January: On Tory tax policy. Mentions Chris Patten, the Geneva Convention, Wavell and Auchinleck, Rommel and Montgomery, Noel Coward, Norman Tebbit.

9 February: On Paddy Ashdown's adultery. Mentions Max Weber, Pareto, Lloyd George, Churchill.

16 February: The week before the first US primary, Johnson reports from New Hampshire. He thinks it "unlikely" that Bill Clinton will stay in the race after the New Hampshire poll. "Not much more will be heard of Mr Clinton."

1 March: Back from abroad. Writes on the Tories' election policies. Mentions Francis Fukuyama, *Mein Kampf*, Irish Home Rule, German rearmament.

15 March: On election issues. Mentions the 1867 Reform Act.

22 March: On Labour's taxation policy. Mentions Stafford Cripps, Asquith, First World War, Neville Chamberlain, the Peterloo Massacre, *War and Peace*.

29 March: On Labour's policies. Mentions Peter Mandelson, the 1867 Reform Act, W.E. Gladstone.

12 April: On election result. Mentions Lord Melbourne.

19 April: On John Smith MP. Mentions 18th century Whigs, 19th century Tories, Sir Robert Peel, abolition of the Corn Laws, Disraeli.

3 May: On John Major's popularity. Mentions the historian G.M. Young, Lloyd George, Palmerston, the 1832 Reform Bill.

17 May: On the European Community. Mentions the Victorian politician Lord Salisbury, Disraeli, the First World War, Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany.

7 June: On Andrew Morton's book about Princess Di. Mentions Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria-Hungary (d. 1889), Herbert Morrison, Petain.

14 June: More on Andrew Morton's book. Mentions Queen Victoria, Walter Bagehot, Gladstone, Lord Rosebery.

21 June: On the Goverment's future. Mentions the Victorian politician Sir William Harcourt, Churchill, Stanley Baldwin. And, by way of variety, Diaghilev.

LIBEL NEWS

TUB OF GUTS Peter Clarke, the former Conservative candidate who successfully sued the *Indescribablyboring* for libel, will not see much of the £20,000 damages he was awarded.

Unusually, the jury reported a majority verdict on the damages and failed to reach verdicts on two of the alleged defamations. This suggests the case was not as cut and dried as the plaintiff had imagined.

The *Indescribablyboring* failed to prove its allegation that Clarke had called for the legalisation of incest at a conference in Leicester, and Clarke claimed that a document supplied anonymously to the paper purporting to be a copy of his speech was a forgery. The *Indescribablyboring* has now been left with a bill for trial costs estimated at £150,000.

But costs awarded at trial, as opposed to those agreed in settlement between the parties, are subject to taxation — that is, they can be independently assessed by a special judge known as a taxing master. Since Clarke's costs have been incurred by avaricious solicitor Peter Carter-Fuck, there is every likelihood that they will be reduced on taxation.

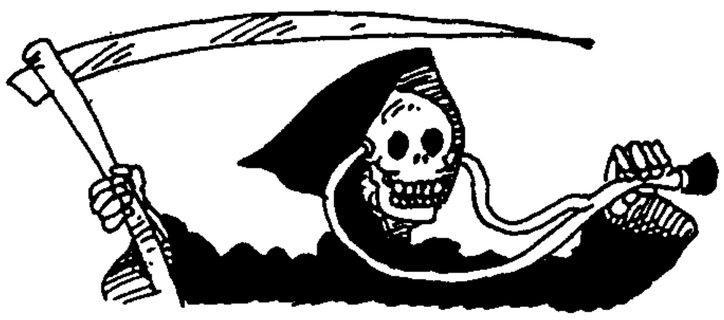
Clarke was fortunate in that, being a right-winger, he qualified for financial support from the Goldsmith Foundation, a charitable trust for libel plaintiffs founded by the egregious Sir Jams. There is a snag, however. Because the fund is administered by Carter-Fuck, any litigant who applies for support is obliged to retain Carter-Fuck as his solicitor. Clarke now realises that if Carter-Fuck is denied his full costs by the taxing master, he will simply demand them from his client.

THESE ARE troubling times for Lord Stevens, chairman of Express Newspapers, who has lately found himself both pursuing and defending libel actions that concern his murky connections to Cap'n Bob.

A few months back, Lord Stevens issued a libel writ against the *Grauniad* over a report that he had been named at a parliamentary social security select committee as having attended a City lunch shortly after Maxwell's death, at which he had allegedly said that Cap'n Bob "may have milked the pension fund of £300 million".

The *Grauniad* had pointed out that this was before any official revelation of the pensions frauds and that Lord Stevens, as the head of an IMRO member, Invesco MIM, had certain obligations to answer IMRO's questions. Stevens sued and the paper began to prepare its case, gathering witness and statements. Once it had dawned on Stevens that the *Grauniad* was determined to fight, Stevens sued for peace instead. A settlement was reached and announced, though it was not disclosed that Stevens had agreed to take no damages whatsoever.

"I've lost my credibility"



DOING THE ROUNDS

THE redundancy of biochemist Dr Chris Chapman from Leeds General Infirmary after 24 years (see *Eyes passim*) is, as we reported, entirely unconnected with official resentment at the way he has consistently alleged financial and commercial irregularities in the LGI pathology department.

We know the two are not connected because everybody in charge of the NHS trust keeps saying so. So we can confirm that there is no connection between the fact that Dr Ian Barnes was one of the panel which made the redundancy selection and had earlier been investigated and officially exonerated after allegations by Chapman.

Barnes was being paid as a consultant by Belgian firm Medgenix — a relationship apparently approved by his employers — but auditors appointed by the trust cleared him of improperly pushing the company's products on the LGI pathology dept.

Allegations against others by Dr Chapman were upheld and succeeded in saving substantial amounts of NHS money. His employers have thanked him by saving even more money — by declaring him redundant the day before his 50th birthday, thereby depriving him of every penny of his pension until he's 60. One day later and the blow of losing his job would have been cushioned by a pension for ten years. So concerned were the Tory-appointees to make this saving that trust mandarins ensured his redundancy notice was delivered by motorbike courier.

● GORGEOUS, pouting Virginia Bottomley's recent thumbs-up to NHS whistle-blowing is a trifle hasty in the face of the post-election boom in waiting lists and mass sacking of some of the more competent NHS managers.

Four senior managers at the **Riverside Health Authority** in **west London** were sacked last month and others have followed in **Mersey, Northern and South Western** (overseen by arch axe-woman Catherine "Don't Push Me" Hawkings [*Eye* 795]).

Mrs Bottomley claims that whistle-blowing "through the correct channels" will get results. Staff at the **United Bristol Healthcare Trust (UBHT)** have been whistling about the dismal mortality statistics in the paediatric cardiac surgery unit since 1988 (*Eye* 793). And while **UBHT's** chief executive John Roylance, the Royal College of Surgeons and Duncan Nichol, the chief executive of the NHS Management Executive are all well aware of the problem, they seem more concerned with silencing the blowers.

In America, the mortality rate for arterial switch, an operation to connect congenitally transposed arteries from the heart, is now 0 percent. Nearer to home in Birmingham, it is 3 percent. In Bristol, despite the fact that the operation has been performed since 1988, it is 30 percent. Sadly, consultant cardiologists at the **Bristol Children's Hospital** continue to refer patients to their surgeons "to support the local unit". As a recently retired and very eminent cardiac surgeon in Southampton says: "*Everyone* knows about Bristol."

Action has, however, been taken by **East and North Herts district health authority** who, in conjunction with local GPs, have set a contract with the local surgery department that excludes services provided by a consultant they felt to be sub-standard. The consultant has now retired.

● KEN GRANT, chief executive of **City and Hackney NHS Trust**, which includes **St Bartholomew's Hospital**, steadfastly refuses to implement the 1 February pay award for junior doctors, claiming he has been given no extra money to foot the bill although given ample time to budget for it. Mr Grant is due to deliver a lecture on 9 July at Barts on "dealing with difficult doctors". He can be assured a good turn out.

● **LEICESTER'S** cataract scandal (*Eye* 795) seems to have invaded the **Derbyshire Royal Infirmary**. A 78-year-old patient with rapidly failing vision was told on his first visit: "Come back in 12 months and I'll see what I can do." A year later, he was told: "Oh yes, the cataracts are quite bad I'll put you on the list." Sensing his distress, the eye surgeon moved in for the kill: "You can have it done next week if you go privately". Still, what's £1,200 to a pensioner?

● MR S.C. DAY, acting chief executive of **Bristol's Southmead NHS Hospital Trust** may consider Dr Peter Harrison to be "a well respected clinician" (Letters, *Eye* 795) but their combined treatment of junior doctors is unlikely to win any prizes.

Macho-management tactics of refusing to employ locums to cover absent doctors and failing to meet hours reductions targets have lead to acrimonious confrontation, poor morale and errors in treatment which in today's legal climate could even result in overworked junior doctors facing manslaughter charges.

Before the current intake of juniors arrived, **Ham Green Hospital** transferred all its geriatric patients to **Southmead**, but the number of medical house-officers was cut from 12 to 9. Recently, two house-officers, a senior house officer and the consultant were absent without replacement, leaving four house-officers to run the 104-bedded geriatric unit for two weeks.

On Sunday 14 June, both on-call medical house-officers were off sick, leaving a single senior house-officer to look after 250 medical beds, cover the coronary care and haematology units *and* man the cardiac arrest bleep alone. A junior house-officer was left unsupervised and untrained to look after critically ill patients on the infectious disease unit (IDU), giving chemotherapy and organising urgent brain scans, until a locum senior house officer belatedly arrived without any infectious disease experience. This, despite management being given two months' notice to find a locum. Indeed, a young patient who died unexpectedly on IDU over the weekend had only been seen by a house officer during his final illness.

A senior Southmead manager was recently overheard on Parkway station saying: "I'll get some work out of these bloody juniors." Those receiving a sickly letter from health minister Brian Mawhinney praising the Government's deal for junior doctors have every right to feel sceptical.

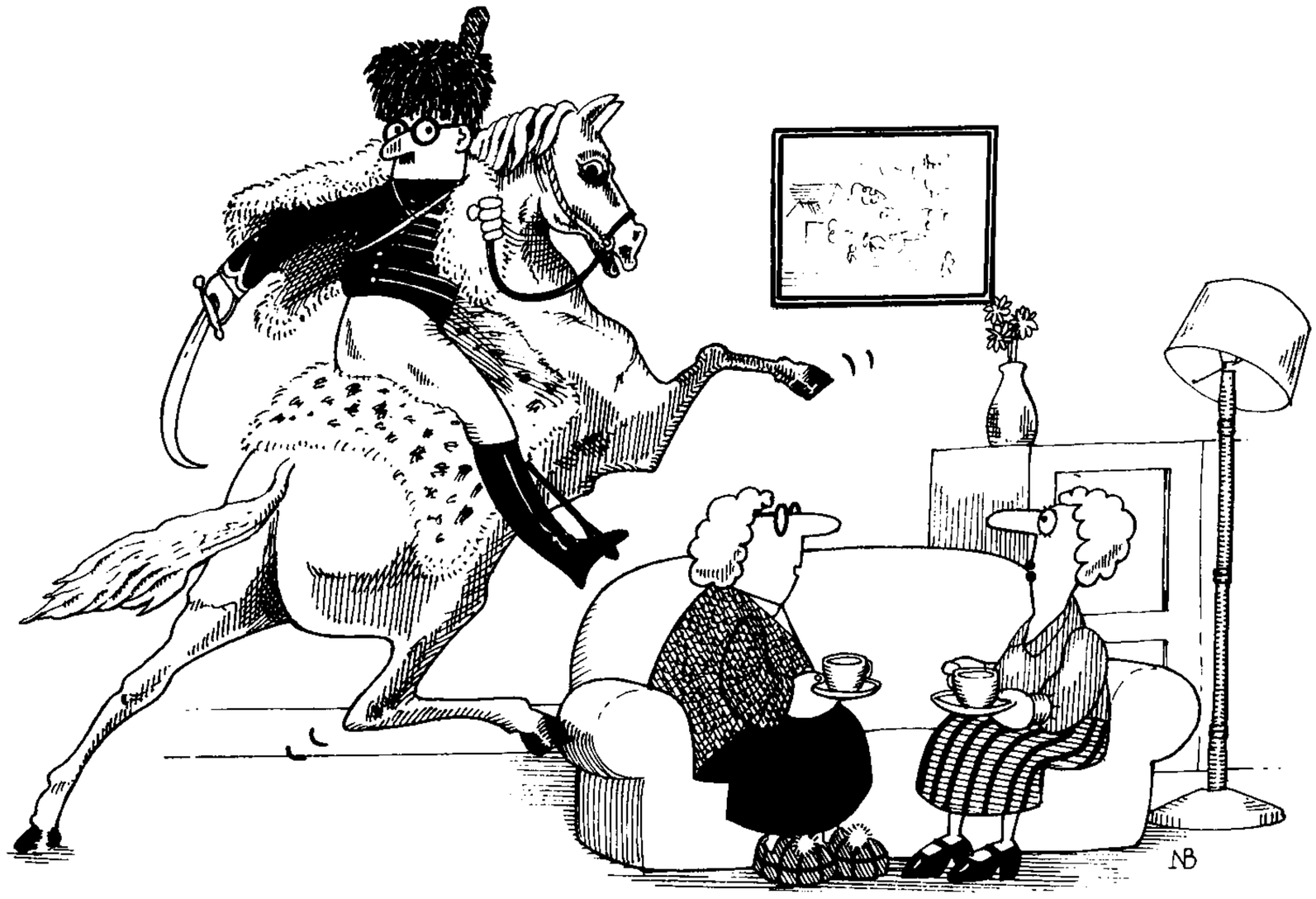
Southmead's excuse for its dangerously low staffing levels is lack of money. The same reason is being touted for the closure of the children's kidney unit, which was only ever operational because of charitable donation.

● APOLOGY: In *Eye* 795, we may have given the impression that money-grabbing managers at the **Central Manchester Hospitals' Trust** had decided to double car parking fees for the sick, bereaved and staff from 30 pence to 60 pence a visit. We now accept that this was inaccurate. The new fee is £1 per visit (managers excepted).

● FORWARD-LOOKING **Northampton Health Authority** has come up with a brave new plan for staff who live in the **Princess Marina Hospital** and care for mental patients. The accommodation of nurses and staff at the hospital has always been taken into account *when* negotiating their (very low) pay and (awful) working conditions.

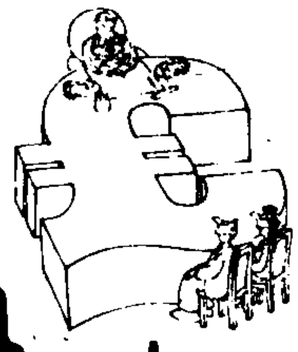
In March the accommodation officer wrote to all mental health staff telling them their rents were going up by 40 per cent. Now some of the staff, who have dutifully paid the increase, have been told by "hotel services" manager, Mr D.C. Aubrey, that they must get out of their homes altogether. The policy of the authority seems to be to negotiate low pay increases because the staff live on low rents at the hospital, then put up the rents, then evict.

M.D.



"George is quite a romantic old thing, really"

HUSBAND



Bankers

MR AND MRS Thomas (not their real names) gave birth to a baby last month and in the ensuing chaos and excitement went £150 over their agreed overdraft facility of £200.

Unfortunately the Thomases bank with the National Westminster, so they had to pay bank charges over the month amounting to a staggering £447.50 — more even than their monthly mortgage payment.

When Mr Thomas pointed out that because of the exorbitant charges he might have difficulty paying his mortgage, the lending officer at his South Coast branch was very sympathetic: "If the situation goes on I'm sure the council will rehouse you," he said.

Mr Thomas and his wife have a £4,000 bank loan from the Nat West which they pay off at £110 per month, along with a further £40 to reduce their small overdraft. Astonishingly, the Nat West made sure that it had taken its money for the month before charging the couple £27.50 to stop a standing order for the grand sum of £4.50.

Mr Thomas admits that in the month after the birth he paid less attention to his bank account than he should have done. But Nat West appears to have taken full advantage of this. While stopping standing orders for £4.50, its cashpoint machines continued to churn out money, allowing Mr Thomas to exceed his overdraft willy-nilly and charging him £20 each time for "misuse of card". At the same time the bank stopped four standing orders (total charge: £110) in one day.

Mr Thomas *has* kept up his mortgage repayments, but attempts to get the Nat West to minimise its charges have so far failed. If the Nat West had more personal customers like Mr and Mrs Thomas, it could recoup its bad third world and Maxwell debts in no time at all.

UN NEWS

THE HIGHER echelons of the United Nations are full of modest men who have much to be modest about.

They never forgave Giandomenico Picco, the UN hostage negotiator who hit the headlines for his part in arranging the releases in Lebanon, for being photogenic and intelligent. So it was not such a surprise when he announced that he would be leaving the UN to work with Ferruzi Montedison, the Italian conglomerate.

It seems he had been made a job offer by Boo Boo Ghali, the martinet secretary-general, that he could easily refuse. Boo Boo had insisted Picco file advance reports of his travels — a bureaucratic requirement somewhat hard to reconcile with secret negotiations.

In addition, it seems Boo Boo only envisages one Middle East expert in the higher ranks of the UN — himself, despite his gaffe on the non-binding nature of resolution 242. However, Picco may get the better of the deal. He has been offered multi-million book contracts and even a starring role in a film about himself.

REALISING that 800 of his staff had taken the opportunity of the Rio summit to check out global warming on the beach, Boo Boo Ghali struck the board and cried "No more!". UN staff were hauled back from the airport in New York and a total ban was imposed on further staff attending.

Unfortunately, the holiday-makers were already gone and it was the workers who were caught. The people thus marooned in New York included interpreters and similar useful types. They also included under secretary-general Ji Chaozhu, the former Chinese ambassador to London, who was supposed to make a speech in Rio. Only after three days of argument with Boo Boo was he allowed to board his plane.

Sally Deedes

● ***WHO IS responsible for the row between Britain's dentists and health secretary Virginia Bottomley?***

The row centres on proposed cuts in the scale payments dentists receive for individual treatments and, according to the British Dental Association, it is all down to a government cock-up.

The cuts are needed because when the current dental contract was drawn up in 1990, the Government greatly underestimated the number of patients who would seek treatment under it. This mistake lead to the current underfunding and thus the need for cuts.

In February, health secretary William Waldegrave announced that he would accept recommendations from the doctors' and dentists' pay review board for a rise in dentists' salary of 8.5 percent. But this was put on hold during the election. When the dust settled, the new health secretary Virginia Bottomley was handed the poisoned chalice.

She proposed to pay Peter by robbing Paul: that is, to fund the salary rise by cutting the separate scale of fees dentists receive by 7 percent. (The scale was set up for each individual treatment supplied by a dentist for each patient.) She also announced that she would drastically reduce (from £600 to £200) the amount of work a dentist could carry out on a patient before asking permission for further funding from the dental practice board in Eastbourne.

At the outset of the contract the Government estimated that within 18 months 17 million adults and six million children would have registered. Due partly to successful free advertisements circulated through the Family Services Committee, this figure had been exceeded and 23 million adults had registered within a year. Too many dentists were thus apparently treating too many patients.

Due to the miscalculation there is not enough money in the kitty. As a dental spokesman told me: "The limit of £600 was pretty generous, but such a drastic reduction to a £200 limit produces some glaring anomalies. For example, to visit an old person at home and fit dentures would involve the dentist in submitting the plan to the committee and waiting for anything up to four months for permission."

Has anyone worked out how much all the extra bureaucracy will cost?

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

AFTER whingeing about the evils of Europe and the dopeyness of the RSPCA, it is only fair for Old Muck to point out that due to the lobbying of Britain's favourite charity the European Commission is about to ban the testing of cosmetics on animals.

The luscious Baroness Denton of Wakefield, parliamentary secretary of state for consumer affairs, now has to take this ball and kick it past Europe's council of ministers. If it is a foretaste of victories under the UK's presidency of the community, which starts in July, Old Muck will have to be very contrite indeed...

BRITISH farmers have created another amiable day out for the social calendar: the European Pig and Poultry Festival. It attracted 20,000 visitors and is now set to become an annual event.

One happy accident is the names of its organisers. Dr Mike Duck of the Royal Agricultural Society says he is delighted with the new venture, as do his colleagues Eric Chick and Brian Webb. Mr Peter Hamm, one of the pig exhibitors, was also delighted to have met so many new friends.

The festival was given a lecture on the new Dutch initiative of taxing manure. The Landbouschap of the Netherlands has agreed a co-responsibility levy, a bit like our beloved milk quotas, with farmers liable to pay 25 florins for every extra kilogram of phosphate in their manure — their beast's manure, that is, not their own. This may sound daft, but it is seen as a pricing device to stop Dutch dairy herds poisoning the polders even more. Will any of our farmer politicians emulate the Dutch manure magnates?

THE Zoonosis Order and other absurd rituals imposed on egg producers has been further exposed as a ministry folly by research that confirms what poultry farmers have always known: *salmonella enteridis* — the one Mrs Edwina Curry was so anxious to protect us from — is air borne.

So, every time you see the preposterous ministry vets dressed in space suits and washing their wellies in disinfectant, remember to laugh. The ministry imposed fans are propelling the bacteria around faster, while lots of earnest men win salaries and expenses for slaughtering innocent flocks.

The Zoonosis Order is the clearest piece of fatuity any minister has ever invented and then defended.

THE PRICE of maggots is about to double thanks to Brussels.

Britain's biggest sport — angling — has caved in and accepted another loopy piece of Euro-intrusion. An EC order has specified that maggot farms — Essex is such a useful county — must replace their ancient and trustworthy smelly maggot vats with washable stainless steel vats.

A maggot of course is a maggot and just as tasty to a coarse fish whether nurtured in steel or concrete or wooden vats. But this ridiculous move will at least bring comfort to a corner of the 8th floor of the Berleymont where a team of Eurocrats are busy harmonising our maggot factories.

BRIDGING the Trade Gap — The Issue of Potatoes is a wheeze by the Potato Marketing Board to encourage Britons to think twice before buying Egyptian, Canary or Cypriot potatoes.

Clearly, the free trade spirit of 1992 has got nowhere near the board's Oxford HQ. Around 85 percent of the potatoes eaten here are home produced, but the board is still writing to MPs urging them to help close the gap.

It is a real discovery to know that the average MP eats more than 100 kilos of potato every year. Unforgivably the Commons kitchens will buy Dutch chilled and part-fried potatoes...

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

WHAT'S ALL THIS GEORGE?
..GOT THE WIFE COOKING FOR THE TOURISTS
FARMHOUSE FOOD
MENU
DAFT BUGGERS WILL PAY ANYTHING FOR GOOD OLD FASHIONED COUNTRY GRUB
LIKE TO TRY THE FARMHOUSE VEG SOUP?
EYUKKK!!! NEEDS MORE PARAQUAT!
albert

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

STAFFORDSHIRE

TWO YEARS after Labour-controlled Staffordshire county council was forced to abandon pindown, the brutal and discredited method of controlling youngsters in its care, controversy rumbles on.

And despite the ridicule the civilised world directs at the child-abusing council, Nalgo, the local government union, is still not convinced of the system's shortcomings.

Many social workers sacked for implementing pin-down belong to Nalgo, and the union seems more concerned with protecting its discredited members' interests than ensuring that the pin-down victims receive adequate compensation.

Nalgo is rushing to back the case of sacked social worker Jaime Rodriguez who was in charge of two of the council homes most involved in implementing pin-down. Rodriguez is now threatening to take his case to an industrial tribunal, despite having introduced pin-down into the Hartshill Road home in Stoke and the Birches home in Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1987.

Although the council knows about Rodriguez's culpability for Hartshill Road it doesn't know he is also responsible for pin-down at the Birches. This could be because, by a strange and tragic coincidence, most of the documents relating to those incidents have been lost.

The lost documents include the care record of the barefoot waif, "C.J.", whose plight has been documented in the *Eye* (she was incarcerated a la pindown for the crime of having been abused by her step-father and escaped in the snow in her nightdress only to be sent back to continue her council incarceration.)

Because the council has lost her documents, C.J. has still received no compensation, although, having spent a total of 84 days under the Stalag-styled pin-down system, she remembers the names and actions of most of her incarcerators, including Rodriguez.

Will Nalgo put its own house in order before defending the pin-down perpetrators? After all, while C.J. was in care no Nalgo member in the education department insisted that she attend school — her school records show that she missed at least eight weeks at the beginning of 1987. Doubtless the council felt that a spot of pin-down would be better education than anything school could offer.

BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM social services department has found a sure way to end the chaos at the notorious St John children's home (see *Eyes passim*). It will be demolished.

Crises at the home peaked with the resignation of principal Tony Myers and assistant education principal Colin Jewit, and the early retirement of deputy principal David Hughes. They were followed by the suspension of social worker Earl John for alleged "excessive force".

Then came the hospitalisation of two social workers. Mike Fenwick was attacked in the new top security unit. When he tried to summon help the alarm bell did not work and he ended up with a broken nose. In another part of the home Mike Duckworth was kicked unconscious — again without help arriving in time.

Now social services has said it wants to refurbish the home. But secret papers obtained by the *Eye* show the plan is to empty the building and then demolish it. The cleared site will be used to build a new home for unruly teenage male offenders. News of this plan is being kept away from the long-suffering locals. They might have a word or two to say about it.

Meanwhile, ambitious child care committee chairwoman Eve Brook is determined that the home will not be a thorn in her side that it has been for predecessors. St John's must go...

HORSHAM

DROUGHT-RIDDEN Tory councillors in Horsham, West Sussex, want to build a municipal golf course on the town's development-threatened outskirts even though nearby courses already offer ludicrous inducements to win custom.

Much of the 140-acre site designated for the 18-hole course is a nature reserve, however, set up by the council only five years ago. Although opposition to the change of use is supported by Sussex Wildlife Trust, the RSPB and numerous other groups, the council insists a golf course would be just as healthy for the wildlife.

Legally the council is only obliged to consult English Nature, the Government's advisory body on nature conservation, before turning a nature reserve into a building site. Yet Horsham has already bent its application and by-passed objectors by abolishing the area's nature reserve status, the first such instance since reserves were introduced in 1949.

To finance the golf course the council wants to build... more than 60 luxury houses around the course, which should make the surviving wildlife feel very at home. Unfortunately the land has department of environment-approved "local gap" status "to prevent the coalescence of settlements" — building houses on it would also be contrary to the council's own planning policy.

But that's no problem either. The council is sensibly seeking to redesignate the area as "housing land" and has applied to itself for planning permission to build the homes.

LEEDS

IT HAS taken the local authority in Leeds almost 90 years to spot an environmental disaster on its doorstep — and it may well take just as long for the council to do anything about it.

The Roberts asbestos factory opened in the Armley area near the city centre in 1899 and closed in 1959. Older locals recall played as children in the dust that covered the area.

Over the years the usual high number of factory workers died from asbestos-related diseases — but so did an increasing number of people who had never worked in the factory. Then, almost 30 years after the factory closed, it was found that many of the nearby houses were *still* contaminated with the deadly dust.

Although the city council is the largest landlord in the area, it didn't uncover this problem for itself — it learnt about it from a television documentary (*First Tuesday*) in 1988. Since the "discovery" all the council has done is carry out tests and warn people not to go into their lofts! Unabashed, it is now considering forcing non-council tenants in the area to pay towards its belated decontamination programme.

BURY

UNDETERRED by losing millions when it invested its savings in the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, Labour-run Bury council in Greater Manchester is good at wasting smaller sums of other people's money, too.

This one-sheep town in the Pennines has just admitted paying out to a circus troupe after cancelling a show. And why did it cancel the show? Because it wanted to show solidarity with the rights of "performing" animals.

As the council was reminded on the eve of a high court hearing, it had already signed a contract allowing Gerry Cottle's circus to take place in a local park. Bury's pangs of political correctness cost it about £5,000, not to mention any indirect profits which may have accrued from a rare night of harmless entertainment in the grim borough.

During the general election campaign much effort was made to keep developments from the ears of voters, but Labour lost both seats anyway.

When council leaders have already wasted £6.5 million in BCCI, a disaster about which the council is still unrepentant and feels no sense of responsibility, a few grand, of course, is neither here nor there.

WIGAN

WIGAN, the North of England's joke town and another supporter of BCCI (£1.5 million), still can't stop its council officers wasting money.

The retiring leisure services boss Gilbert Swift, for example, felt no one would miss £47,000 for a dinky new miniature steam train at local "beauty" spot Haigh Hall Park. Unfortunately, town hall members had previously agreed to spend a similar sum on much-needed sewerage works to dissipate the noxious smell from the park's river and had banned council officers from making any unnecessary expenditure.

What irked the councillors was not just that Swift broke their freeze on spending but that he ordered the train and carriages without informing them and then unilaterally named the train set the Gilbert Swift, after himself and doubtless in honour of his own major achievements in local government.

Now that Swift has retired Wigan council has little chance of making him pay up: "I am not interested. I have retired. I find the whole thing very tedious, very boring and very trivial," he told reporters.

Meanwhile the council's "administration" has been exposed after a former attendant at the municipal-run Wigan Pier attraction admitted stealing £28,000 from the takings. Management had made no checks on what happened to punters' entrance fees and had not audited the pier's takings.

HILLINGDON

TORY councillors in Hillingdon, north west London, are, quite literally, pouring charge-payers' money down the plug-hole.

Having agreed to write off Ruislip Lido's £22,000 rates bill while a private company brought in to manage the venue foots an estimated six-figure bill to refurbish the pool, councillors have found to their amazement that the repair work cost the company, Eau Naturelle, one pound.

The council, held by the Tories with a one-seat majority, had calculated that it would cost between £70,000 and £130,000 to fill in the swallow holes at the bottom of the lido. But a local water-ski club struck a clever deal with the National Rivers Authority which was looking for somewhere to dump clay cleared from nearby Yeading Brook during flood-prevention work and charged Eau Naturelle £1! Of course, the NRA could have struck a similar deal directly with the council which would have saved the charge payer slightly less than £22,000.

Worse still, unbeknown to the councillors and Eau Naturelle, tippers found the dumped clay at the bottom of the dry pool irresistible and added a few tons of builders' rubble, thereby ruining the eagerly-awaited repair work. Now Hillingdon is blaming Eau Naturelle for the farce and wants to tear up the company's 99-year lease to manage the pool.

"... and we'll have fun, fun, fun 'til the oil slick takes the seabirds awaaay..."

Letters

Old nicks

Sir,

I do not know who M.D. of Doing the Rounds is, but he cannot have had much of a scientific training. On the one hand he complains that laparoscopic surgery has never been subject to a controlled trial, and on the other he presents a single anecdotal case of three surgeons taking 12 hours to carry out a laparoscopic hemicolectomy. Either he relies on anecdotal cases or he has a controlled trial — he cannot have it both ways. M.D. clearly does not appreciate that there is a learning process which he has not taken into account as he does not say whether the case presented was the first carried out by those surgeons or is their average time for such an operation.

Controlled trials of laparoscopic cholecystectomy and of laparoscopic appendicectomy are in fact under way in two centres in the UK. The other point to mention is that the main cost of surgery in both patient comfort and money is the length of in-patient stay; laparoscopic surgery reduces both of these and patients get back to work much more quickly than when some clumsy surgeon has hacked a great hole in their abdomen. Perhaps M.D. is one of those Luddite surgeons who prefers the latter to the former?

F.W. CROSS MS FRCS

Consultant Surgeon, Broxbourne, Herts.

No ill feeling

Sir,

In The S.H.I.T.

I see that Mr Stephen Day (acting Chief Executive S.H.I.T., EYE 792, Doing the Rounds) has deigned to speak on behalf of "the organisation", and the fact that his "organisation" is appalled by a written attack on the integrity of Dr Peter Harrison. Well, Mr Day and his colleagues at Southmead Trust HQ (referred to by staff as "the bunker") speak only for themselves.

As the elected representative of the largest trade union in this "organisation" I must tell you that the majority of staff — especially those in the "Commercial Services Department" now threatened with wholesale privatisation of jobs — do feel that they are unquestionably in the S.H.I.T.

We applaud your comments and hope that you will continue to uncover the facts behind the REAL *resource misuses in what's left of the NHS.*

Yours sincerely,
B.A. CLARK, BEM

Branch Secretary, COHSE 762 Southmead Hospital.

Punch drunk

Sir,

It was charitable of you to refer to me (EYE *796) as "the most brilliant theatre critic the world will ever know", and I therefore have no wish to appear ungrateful. But three times in the last three years you have announced that I was "dismissed from* PUNCH *by Alan Coren's successor", three times I have written to correct you, and three times you have been good enough to publish the correction.*

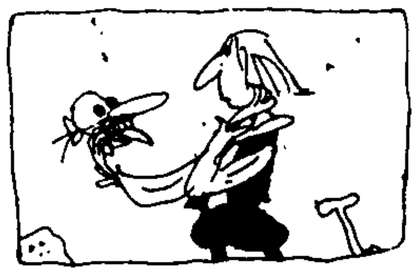
Could we therefore have one last attempt at getting this on to your file: I actually worked for two of Coren's successors, and resigned when the third one was announced. He was the one who then appointed "giddy New Yorker Rhoda Koenig", who therefore became PUNCH*'s last drama critic.*

I have never yet been dismissed from anywhere, except an Australian junior boxing team when I was nine. As soon as I am, I promise you will be the first to know.

SHERIDAN MORLEY,

London SW10.

LUVVIES



"I had this kind of traumatic thing when I was doing Burn This in NY," he [John Malkovich] says. The trauma involved a sports jacket which, having been purchased in LA, sat in his cupboard for a year, before coming out one fateful day in New York.

On venturing to the theatre, he claims his fellow artistes looked at him strangely. "In the end I said, 'What's the matter? Is it the coat?' and I started to cry. He abandoned the offending item on a stairwell. "That was probably the worst day of my life, except for when my father died," he says.

Evening Standard

"He [John Stride] is a confrontational person and his acting is close to his life. He comes in and out like a whirlwind leaving the rest of us like bent saplings. But it's good that he confronts us, both myself and Melvyn [Bragg]. It stretches us."

PATRICK GARLAND
Evening Standard

Submitted by Angela Hawke, J. O'Connell.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.

Conduct up and coming

Sir,

Lunchtime O'Boulez made a major balls-up (Music & Musicians, EYE *796) by describing the conductor Simon Streatfield (spell him right) as a "lacklustre Canadian" and "obscure ex-viola player".*

Fact 1 — In the 1950s and 1960s, Streatfield was principal viola of Sadler's Wells Opera, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields (which he co-founded).

Fact 2 — He holds dual British/Canadian citizenship. He was principal conductor of the Quebec Symphony Orchestra for eight years during which time the orchestra's rating, in Canadian terms, rose to no. 2 (surpassed only by Charles Dutoit's Montreal Symphony Orchestra).

Fact 3 — As an economy measure, the Board of Management ordered him to effectively sack 17 of the orchestra's rank and file in 1990. To his credit, he steadfastly refused and a year later was forced to resign as a result. Far from being "The Great Unknown", he achieved "People's Hero" status among North American musicians.

By all means rubbish unprincipled crap conductors — there are plenty around. Streatfield is not one of them.

Yours faithfully,
DAVE SMITH,

London N16.

Pit stop

Sir,

Rotten Boroughs: Lambeth

I refer to your Rotten Boroughs spot (19 June) and thank you for your kind wishes for recovery.

Readers will be pleased to know that both I and "partner", famous actor Tim Donnelly are now well on the road to being fighting fit.

The serpents in the snake pit better watch out, I'm back!

Yours faithfully,
CLLR PETER EVANS,

London Borough of Lambeth, SW2.

Jolly soopermarkets

Sir,

I last saw Mr Roy Greenslade at a party given by Emma Soames — not "recently" but in fact eight (8) years ago, when he begged me to go and work for him at Mr Maxwell's MIRROR.

The only time I have been fawned on in a supermarket (actually Marks & Spencer) was six years ago. But the person certainly wasn't Roy Greenslade. On the contrary, he was quite young and handsome.

Yours,
JULIE BURCHILL.

PS: Did I give Martyn Harris a nasty review because he gave me one? Of course I did. What other reason on earth could there be to wade through such a crap book as THE MOTHER IN LAW JOKE*?*

Book shelved

Sir,

As a gullible book-buying printer, I am indebted to Martyn Harris for advertising Julie Burchill's hatchet job review of his latest comic novel, THE MOTHER IN LAW JOKE *(Letters, June 19). Sadly, it comes too late for me, as I had already shelled out for his book, only to discover its total absence of comedy for myself. Like other innocents unfamiliar with the "back-scratching and log-rolling" to which he refers, I had been seduced by glowing write-ups from his fellow journos and book-reviewers ("I laughed out loud" etc.) in a variety of journals. A similar process had also fooled me into buying Ms Burchill's opus* AMBITION. *This volume now adorns the top shelf of my local Oxfam shop.*

Publishers might do well to reflect that offloading mediocre offerings from media "stars" on a trusting public may be accelerating rather than arresting the decline of their industry. At least La Burchill and El Harris can console themselves that, however piss-poor their fiction skills, their analyses of each other's worth are devastatingly accurate.

Yours,
JOSEPH FRASER,

London W3.

Lookalike

Graham Taylor

Billy the Fish

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between the man/fish goalkeeping maestro Billy the Fish and the great England manager Graham Taylor.

Are they by any chance related? I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
REBECCA MORTON,

Sheffield.

I-SPY *Austria*

Submitted by Paul & Inge Miller. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Nature study

Sir,

*Old Muckspreader (*EYE *796) seems to have lost the use of his (or is it her?) eyes and ears, but the mouth has produced some more rubbish.*

English Nature's task is to promote nature conservation and we do this vigorously and actively across England. Old Muckspreader suggests that an important study on pesticide spray drift is not widely available. He is wrong. The results of the research are publicly available as they should be from publicly funded research. I should be happy to give Old Muckspreader a copy of the report and offer the EYE *a short article for publication.*

I might add that the research is for the benefit of wildlife not for the benefit of the pesticide industry.

Yours sincerely,
DEREK LANGSLOW,

Chief Executive, English Nature, Peterborough.

Acute shortage

Sir,

How interesting, if slightly alarming, to read in your august organ (Street of Shame, 796) of the INDIE*'s decision to dispense with the use of accents in a variety of foreign languages. Sadly this somewhat odd economy puts paid to a future plan to send seasonal greetings to my Spanish friends through their columns. The word for "year" in Spanish is accented — the same but unaccented word "ano" can mean something slightly different. Somehow "Wishing You All A Happy New Arsehole" doesn't sound quite right.*

Yours,
CAMPBELL LENNIE,

Edinburgh.

Bottom line

Sir,

After however many years it is since PRIVATE EYE *burst into print, I wonder if I could persuade you to make a dramatic change to your format? Would it be possible for you to put the name and the date of issue at the bottom of each page as many other periodicals do (*THE SPECTATOR *is one out of countless examples)? If I cut out any of the gems which appear in your pages either to show others or to file, it's rather a nuisance having to write in the reference each time.*

Yours faithfully,
J.N. MURPHY,

Pershore, Worcs.

Borderline

Sir,

In your latest edition, you refer to Andrew Morton having a "strong Leeds accent" in contrast to his wife, who is "well-spoken". This follows a recent reference to an OBSERVER *journalist as being a "northerner", although I do not recall anyone ever being described as a "southerner".*

A good thing all your readers live within a five mile radius of Soho Square, or some of them might be getting rather irritated.

Yours,
JOHN O'CALLAGHAN,

Bradford.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Michael Armstrong is a keen supporter of boxing, unlike his ring namesake Chris Eubank."

REG GUTTERIDGE
(S. Perry)

"Ah yes, sledging... In the days before the microphones on the pitch, we got that blind MP chap up into the commentary box to lip-read..."

BRIAN JOHNSTON, World Service
(S. Mann)

Kenny Everett: *Can you give me a place name that contains the letters A, G and I?*

Caller: *Yugoslavia.*

Everett: *No, Yugoslavia doesn't have an 'A' in it.*

Capital Gold
(Steven Proctor)

"But aren't these latest Maastricht moves a case of nailing the stable doors and hanging them up long after the horse has bolted?"

RTE ANNOUNCER
(David Ljunggren)

"There's definitely something wrong with Senna's car. It may be a dropped gear, may be a brake problem, may be nothing — but there's definitely something."

MURRAY WALKER, BBC
(Keith Johnson)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

WE ARE THE GANG WHO ARE HOLDING YOUR HUSBAND..
.. GIVE US THE MONEY AND WE'LL RELEASE HIM.
YOU NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT RELEASING HIM.

Letter from India

from Our Own Correspondent

NARASHIMA RAO, who didn't want to be our prime minister, today presides masterfully over our economic, environmental and diplomatic decline.

Aided by a council of totally unsuitable ministers, hemmed in by hostile neighbours and plagued by vacillation, Rao is trying vainly to execute a "holding operation" over galloping unemployment, poverty and terrorism.

His serious demeanour, fluency in eight languages, including Spanish and French, and ostensible economic liberalism have earned him some good press. But in Punjab and Kashmir, where scores are killed daily by militants wanting independence, people think differently. They do not exist for Rao, they say, so long as his minority Congress-I government has its quota of MPs from these states.

Rao heads six ministries, including foreign, personnel, atomic energy and space, science and technology, and rural development, as well as 50 other departments. He is unable to pick replacements when senior bureaucrats retire or are transferred. Hundreds of important files await his imprimatur and many projects needing speedy decisions languish, eventually costing several times more due to Rao's shilly-shallying. According to an analyst Rao is an average bureaucrat, high on theory but dismally low on output.

His much touted liberal economic policies favouring investment have resulted in India's biggest stocks scam and insider trading scandal of more than 30 billion rupees (US$1 billion). The scandal involves several government banks and financial institutions, reportedly working with the connivance of the Central Bank. While the rich have grown richer, the middle classes and poor are pushed closer to the edge by rising prices, inflation (15 per cent and rising) and an almost complete breakdown of institutions and services.

Politically, Rao is torn between greater democracy in the Congress party — party elections were held after 21 years of autocratic rule by the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty — and a desire to hang on to power at all costs. He made big noises about relinquishing the party presidentship, but accepted with alacrity when nominated by obsequious Congressmen.

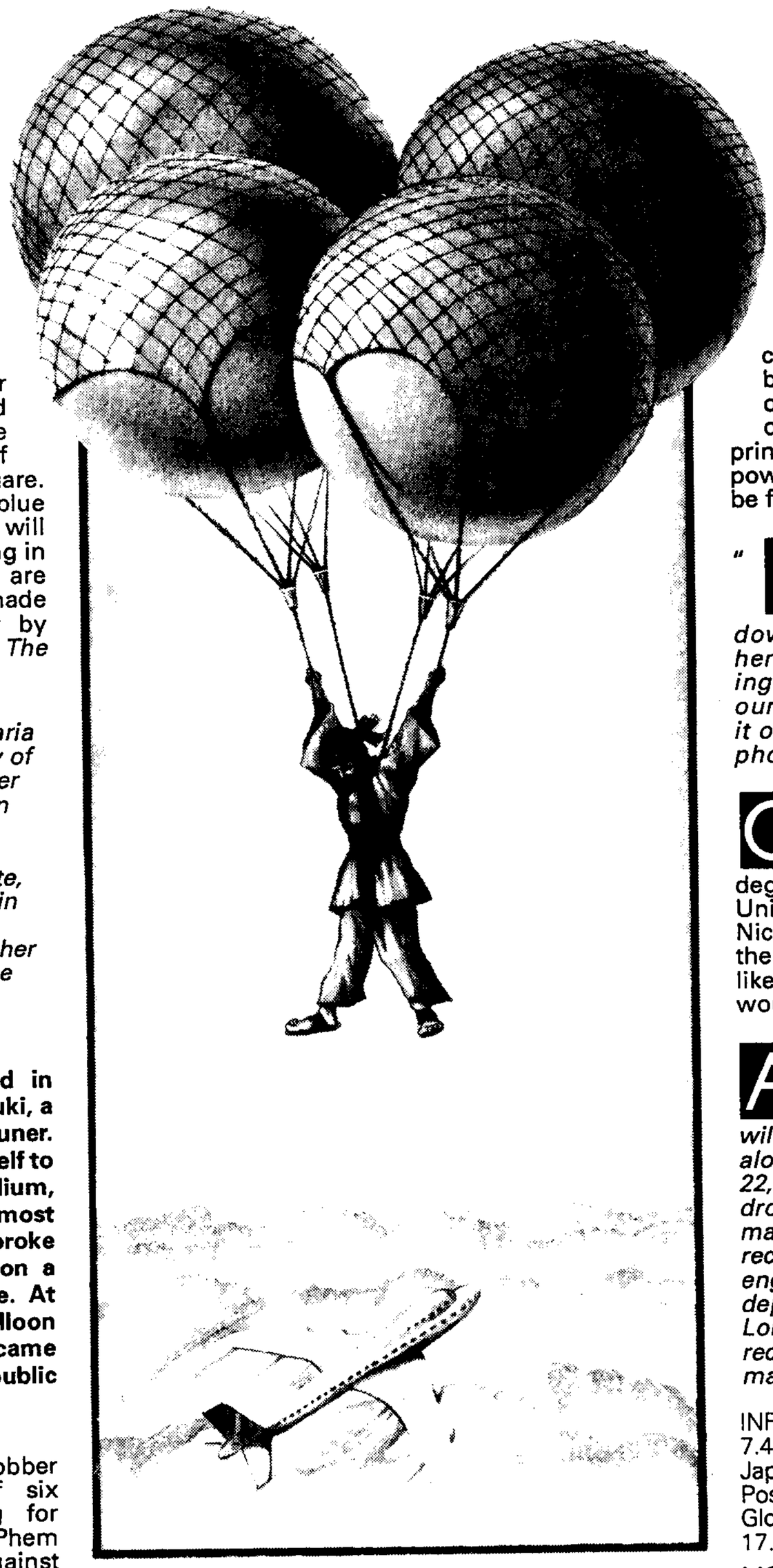
Soon after the elections our wily Brahmin prime minister forced Arjun Singh and Sharad Pawar, ministers of human resources and defence and contenders for his job, to resign their elected party posts to make way for more women and the "socially depressed". A few weeks later he decided against the latter and "nominated" Singh and Pawar to the posts to which they were earlier elected merely to exhibit his power.

Two months ago Rao's foreign minister, Solanki, resigned after admitting to having handed a letter from a nameless lawyer to his Swiss counterpart to delay investigations into kickbacks of more than US$50 million from the import of howitzers from Sweden in 1986 and paid into Swiss banks reportedly by senior Congressmen. Solanki did not reveal at whose behest the letter was handed over, but sources suggest that Rao was behind Solanki's "indiscretion" to shield Sonia Gandhi, wife of his former mentor, Rajiv, who crudely whitewashed investigations into the scandal and lost the election because of it.

Rao has boobed on foreign affairs, too, diluting India's stature in south Asia. Pakistan, our implacable enemy, thumbed its nose at New Delhi by kidnapping and torturing a senior Indian diplomat in Islamabad for refusing to sign a document saying he was a spy. It took Rao a full two days to cancel the sixth round of talks between the foreign secretaries of both countries, but he only did so under pressure from the opposition.

India has also lost out in Afghanistan by vociferously backing president Najibullah and then offering him refuge. Such is the ire of the new Mujahideen government to New Delhi that ethnic Indians living in Kabul for generations with no Indian connections are being hounded out of the country in droves and landing here, penniless. Rao's response has been to thin out the Indian mission in Kabul and — ostrich-like — to hope things will somehow get better. Some hope.

TRUE STORIES



AFTER the Council's meeting, Mr Edward Hickey said: "We heard that the Festival Committee have decided to make a beach out of forty tons of sand in the Market Square. The sea will be represented by a blue carpet and a fully qualified lifeguard will be employed to stop anyone drowning in it, or in the Town fountain. We are Conservative Councillors and we made our thoughts clear on the matter by singing *Oh I Do Like To be Beside The Seaside* before the vote."

DURING her interview, Miss Maria Santos said: "To mark the day of Christ's death, my aunt, Mother Paring, usually has herself crucified in black. This year, after the Virgin appeared to her and said that the occasion should be brought up to date, she decided to wear a strapless sequin dress and blue lipstick. It was a great success. As they drove the nails into her hands and feet she shouted out: 'Love one another and respect your politicians!' It was very moving."

"I HAVE always been interested in flight," said Mr Yoshikazu Suzuki, a 51-year-old Tokyo piano-tuner. "After some thought, I strapped myself to four balloons, filled them with helium, and took off from my roof-garden. Almost at once several of my ballast bags broke free. My light grew steep, and soon a Boeing 747 passed by beneath me. At 17,300 feet I burned one of the balloon cords with my cigarette lighter, and came down at speed onto the roof of a public lavatory just outside Tokyo airport."

LED by Lu Cha Tok, an armed robber who was found guilty of six murders, the men waiting for execution in Hanoi's famous Yeng Phem prison have begun a hunger strike against a Government scheme to replace firing squads with the electric chair. His lawyer, Tan Ha Wey said: "On behalf of the condemned, Lu points out that death by bullet is quick and sure. On the other hand, though we have no objections to the electric chair in principle, our economy is plagued with power cuts and therefore our deaths will be fraught with long delays, and worse."

"MY MOTHER," said Mr Simon Beale, a farmer from Porthowan, "has had to go and lie down. It is true that a fox killed six of her ducks last night, but today, having cooked a piece of gammon for our tea, a dog sneaked in and carried it off while she was on the telephone."

OPPOSING his colleague's request for two years' leave, during which time he would take a masters' degree in Government at Harvard University, ex-president Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua said: "Mr Carrion is a leader of the Sandinistas. No doubt we would all like to go abroad to study — and what would happen then?"

ADMITTING that he had not been thrown into a freezing canal by kidnappers who had said: "We will kill you if you don't leave Jenny alone," Mr James Hay, a youth leader of 22, agreed that he had, in fact, tried to drown himself because the thought of marrying Miss Jenny Hotwatch, a receptionist, to whom he has been engaged for some time, was so depressing. "However," said a west London police spokesman, "he has now recovered from his doubts and will be married to Miss Hotwatch in August."

INFORMATION: Nottingham Evening Post 7.4.92; Glasgow Evening Times 17.4.92; Japan Times 19.4.92; South China Morning Post 2.4.92; West Briton 16.4.92; Toronto Globe and Mail 2.4.92; Ealing Informer 17.4.92.

MONITORS: Donald M. McNicoll, Richard Montague, Hugh Pryse-Davies, Robert McOmie, Anon, Brendan J. O'Byrne, Anon.

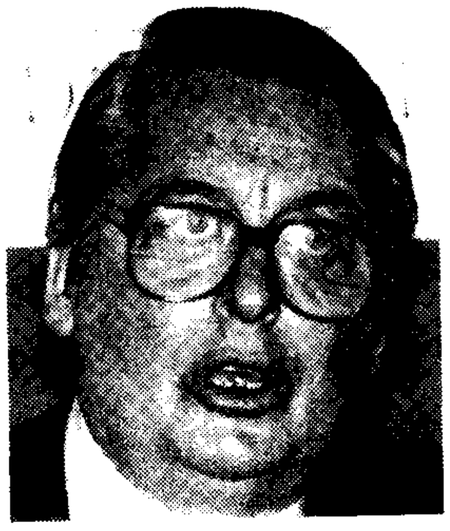
CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

Illuminated by BERT KITCHEN

A Taxi Driver writes

Every week a well-known taxi driver is invited to comment on an issue of topical importance.

This week: **DAVE COLERIDGE** (Cab No 2 Billion) on the AIDS crisis



Did you read about that bloke going round giving everyone AIDS, guv? Bloody disgrace!

And he gets off scot free, that's what gets me. I mean, if he'd stabbed someone to death they'd lynch 'im.

D'you know what I'd do with a bloke like that? Cut his whatsit off *(Shurely 'string him up'? Ed)*. It's the only language these people understand.

I 'ad that Virginia Bottomley in the back of my cab once, well, not literally, ha ha...

Yes, it's Lloyd's Rhyming Slang!

Annual loss	**Not for the boss**
Coleridge	**Filthy rich**
Fishy smell	**Lutine Bell**
Huge claims	**Names**
Oil spill	**Massive bill**
Hurricane Hugo	**End to cash flow**
Underwriter	**£2 billion lighter**
Balance the books	**Bunch of crooks**
Speech from floor	**Piss-poor**
Sell the Jag	**Bit of a drag**
Kids leave public school	**Father's a bloody fool**
Archer, Mary	**Ghastly and ineffective, very**

(That's enough Lloyd's. Ed.)

WIMBLEDON '92 SIX TO WATCH

Private Eye's unique cut-out-'n'-throw-away guide to this year's tips for the top

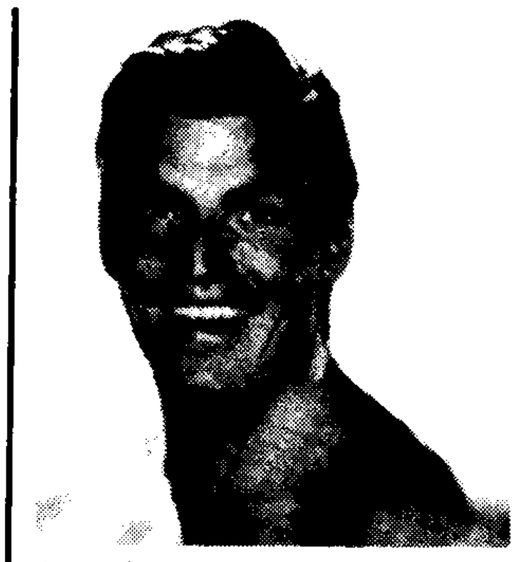
MEN

Wayne Brad. At 36, Brad is probably facing his last Wimbledon. Unlucky to lose in straight sets to fellow Texan Brad Wayne in the Arkansas Clay Championships in April, Wayne's powerful top-spin could this time prove enough to take him all the way to the first round.

Slobodan Sonovabitch. At 27, time is running out for the leader of the Eastern Bloc Brat Pack. Slobodan was unlucky to lose in straight sets to fellow Bulgarian Hertz Rentavan in the Iraqi Open in January. However, his delicate ground strokes and 300 mph serve may give him the edge this year.

Wok Supdoc. At 13, Wok is the rising star of Pacific Rim tennis *(What that? Ed)*. Coached by former Mexican Grand Slam champion Taco Enchilada, this exciting young prospect was only narrowly defeated in straight sets by fellow Easter Islander Wok Adile Dundee in the Australian Ayers Wok Open *(Shurely 'Ayers Rock'? Ed)*. His serve and volley game has already had commentators comparing him to Jean-Paul Georges Ringeau, the veteran Belgian all-weather court grandslammer of the 1920s.

Karl-Heinz Rubberdüch. The magic touch has deserted this 17-year-old German wünderkind so far this season. He was unlucky to be narrowly defeated in straight sets by fellow robot *(Shurely 'German'? Ed)* Otto Terminator-Two in the Dunhill Newfoundland State Classic. However, Wimbledon has always been Karl's lucky venue and he has high hopes of scoring a large amount of cocaine this week *(Shurely 'scoring a spectacular victory this week'? Ed)*.

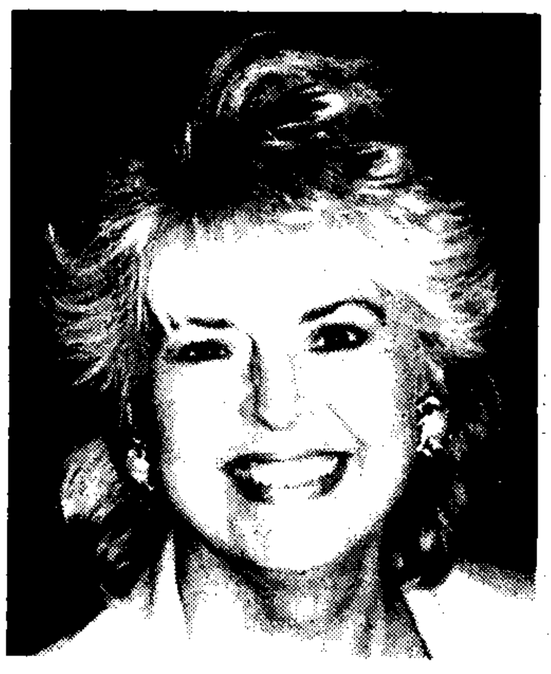


Anna Bollik-Steroid. Appearing this year for the first time in the men's seedings, Anna is largely unfancied, except by the rest of the women players.

WOMEN

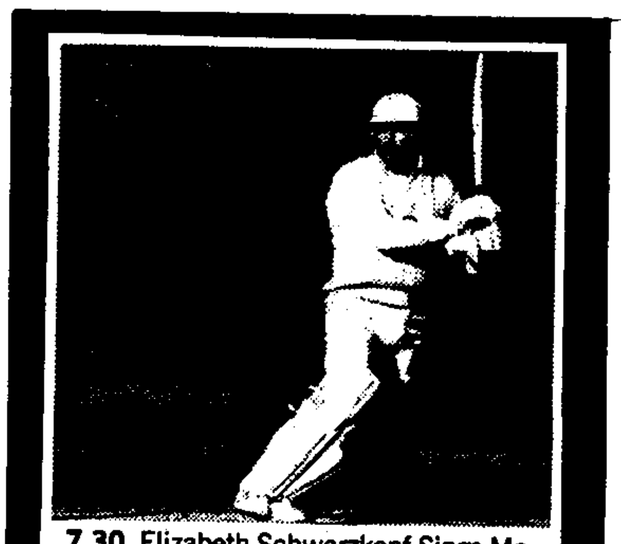
Tagliatella Verdi. 22-year-old Brazilian-born Italian now playing in Argentina. This year she endorses the Kuwait Investment Bank and looks set to repeat her narrow defeat by Karion Karaoke in straight sets in the semi-finals of the Flushing Toilets Open in New Jersey. A grass court specialist, Tagliatella could be this year's dark horse.

Mary-Jo-Beth-Flo-Mary-Jo Oranjeboom. Mary-Jo-etc has one of the longest names in the tournament and, despite being only 12, has got the richest parents on the circuit.



Gloria Hunniford. Host of Radio Two's *Gloria Hunniford Show*. At 52, Gloria is a very keen amateur and Britain's latest tennis hopeful. Certainly she will do no worse than the rest of the British women.

(That's enough Wimbledon seeds. Ed.)



7.30 Elizabeth Schwarzkopf Sings Mozart.

The Independent

● LAST week's letter 'Thatcher's selfish parkers' ended with the words, 'I'm Jack — bugger you!' This should have read, 'I'm all right, Jack —beggar you!'

Oxford Courier

"A surprising lack of biodiversity in the woods today"

NEW MAN NAMED IN OXFORD SPY RING SHOCK

by Our Spy Staff **Chapman Pinchmel'mfallingasleep**

HUMPHREY Noggis, a research Fellow at Maxwell College, Oxford, was a key figure in the infamous Oxford spy ring revealed in newly-discovered KGB files last week.

"Noggis may have been even more important than his contemporary Foggis or even the notorious Roger Boggis," said intelligence expert Rupert Squit MP.

Squit, who writes under the name Nigel Squit, has made a lifetime study of other people's books. Speaking from the House of Commons, Squit told reporters: "I have always known about the Noggis factor. He was a vital link in Oxford's Kremlin connection, who recruited a number of key agents, including Sir Eric Figgis, Sir Montague Wiggis and Desmond Wilcox. *(Shurely 'Sir Desmond Twiggis'? Ed).*

Complete Rubbish

Yesterday, Oxford contemporaries were shocked by the news that Noggis may have been the 17th Man.

Said one former undergraduate at the Queen's College: "I do not remember anyone called Noggis, though

I did sleep with a rather sweet young man called Willoughby after an afternoon's punting on the Isis. I'd rather you didn't put that bit in if you don't mind."

Peter Wright is 107.

POETRY CORNER

Lines on the Retirement of David Frost from TV-am

So, farewell then
David Frost

Master interviewer
And TV
Pundit.

"Hello, Good Evening and
Welcome."

That was your
Catchphrase

"Super to see you."
That was another.

It will be super
Not to see
You for
Quite some time.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

From Sir Herbert Gussett

SIR:–Your readers may be interested to know of the response of one small rural community to the so-called "Crisis In The West End" which has resulted in the closing of many theatres showing so-called "musicals" by "Sir" Andrew Webber and similar left-wing filth.

In a single-handed effort to restore the old values that used to make the British theatre the envy of the world, I have hired our local village hall for seven nights to put on a new play, written by myself, under the title *Deja Vu*. This was taken from the name of the house lived in by my old friend "Buffy" Frobisher, who plays a major role in my play as he sits listening for several hours while the leading character "HG" (played by myself) gives his views on the sorry state of the modern world.

Let me quote verbatim from the script of this remarkable drama to give your readers a flavour of what lies in store should my play ever be staged by Sir Laurence Olivier at his National Theatre:

(The curtain rises on the drawing room of a typical West Country old rectory. Time: the present. Stage left there is a drinks cabinet with a generous profusion of bottles already opened. Over the fireplace a set of native assegais bears witness to the heroic feats of HG's grandfather during the Third Zulu War. Through the french windows we catch a glimpse of Lady Bulimia Gussett ironing. Centre stage two gentlemen are seated in armchairs reading copies of the Daily Telegraph)

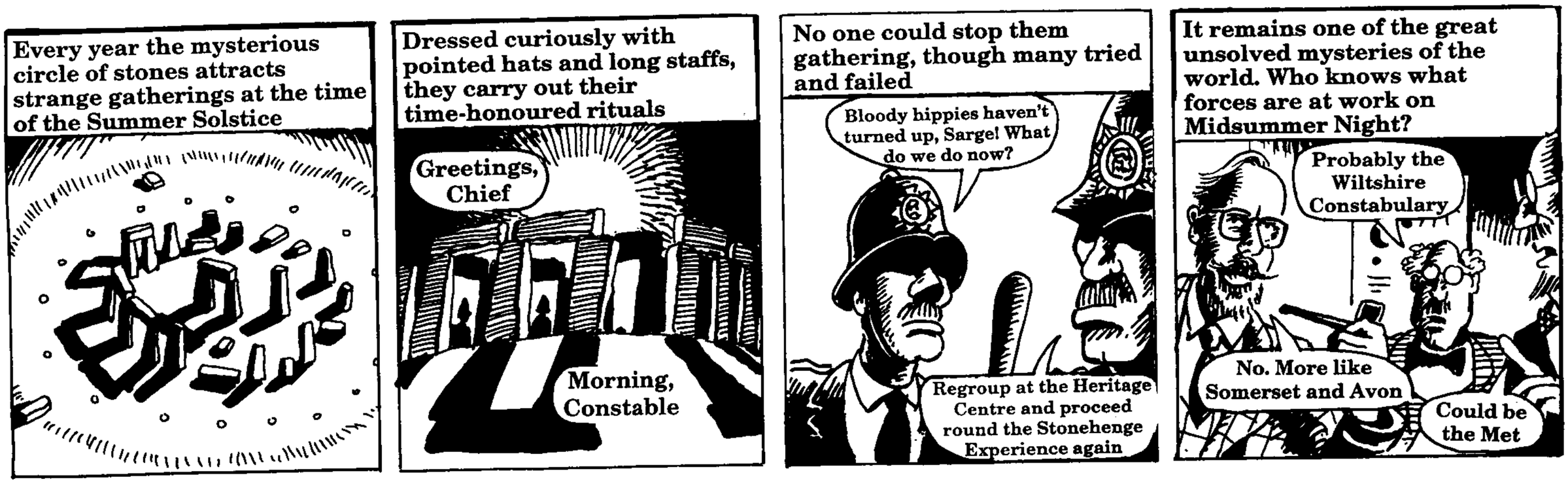
HG: I say, Buffy, there's a very sound letter here from a chap called Gussett. Says the theatre these days is nothing but a lot of left-wing filth written by long-haired weirdos and poofs.

(The scene then changes to the local hostelry, The Lamb & Flag, where the two main characters engage in a long extempore discussion about issues of the day – e.g. women priests, the threat from Brussels to our British way of life, and the need for Mr David Gower to be recalled to the England test team)

I feel sure your readers will agree that in one small corner of the West Country, the British theatre is still very much alive and kicking.

Yours faithfully
H. GUSSETT
Barking Osborne
Dorset

Strange *But True:* Stonehenge


Every year the mysterious circle of stones attracts strange gatherings at the time of the Summer Solstice
Dressed curiously with pointed hats and long staffs, they carry out their time-honoured rituals
Greetings, Chief
Morning, Constable
No one could stop them gathering, though many tried and failed
Bloody hippies haven't turned up, Sarge! What do we do now?
Regroup at the Heritage Centre and proceed round the Stonehenge Experience again
It remains one of the great unsolved mysteries of the world. Who knows what forces are at work on Midsummer Night?
Probably the Wiltshire Constabulary
No. More like Somerset and Avon
Could be the Met

MURDOCH IN STRIPPER STORM

by Our Pornography Staff
Kelvin McFilth and Patsy Slagg

A PROFESSIONAL male striptease artist, Mr G. String, was said to be "in a state of deep shock" last night after finding himself in the same room as Mr Rupert Murdoch.

The incident occurred at the Nudes International Evangelical Breakfast Prayer Meeting, where Mr String had been invited to perform a striptease as part of the service.

Porn-Again Christian

Said Mr String: "Halfway through my act, just as I was removing my leopard-skin dog collar, I looked up, and there he was, sitting there in the front row, bold as brass, with his suit completely on.

"I was sickened, appalled, ashamed to find myself in the same room as this hypocritical old pornographer, who uses the stage name 'The Dirty Digger'."

Huge Prig

"What is worse," Mr String continued, "my wife was watching my act and was forced to sit there, only a few feet from the man who owns the *Sunday Times*."

But Mr Murdoch was unrepentant last night. "Some people may think that what I do is disgusting and immoral. But in the context of a Christian newspaper, it is perfectly acceptable to perform lewd acts in public with Mr Andrew Neill. Thanks be to greed *(shurely 'God'? Ed)*."

TV HIGHLIGHTS

It's back! The Pay-Award-winning comedy

'Yes Please Prime Minister!'

(Dull looking man is talking to distinguished senior civil servant)

PRIME MINISTER: What's all this about a pay review, Sir Humphrey?

HUMPHREY: Well, Prime Minister, it does indeed seem that the pecuniary emoluments for those in the more elevated echelons of the Governmental support apparatus are due for an upward realignment to bring them comparability status with their counterparts in the more commercial sector of the executive community.

PRIME MINISTER: What?

(Audience laughter)

HUMPHREY: We want a huge pay rise.

(More audience laughter)

PRIME MINISTER: Outrageous!

HUMPHREY: That's what we had in mind.

(Even more audience laughter)

PRIME MINISTER: But won't it be hypocritical if I give you lot a huge rise whilst insisting on wage restraint for everyone else?

HUMPHREY: Of course it would. Now just shut up or we won't move to Canary Wharf.

PRIME MINISTER: Would 30% be enough?

HUMPHREY: Yes, please, Prime Minister!

(Audience are carried out in hysterics at concluding catch-phrase)

Ends

To help it promote the rights of people with disabilities, the alliance wants to hear from women who have been pregnant since 1988

NALGO News

11.0 FILM: Percy. Hywel Bennett is the recipient of a pioneering penis transplant in search of its donor in this limp 1971 comedy.
12.55 Dick Spanner.

Grauniad

Sun SPORT

TAYLOR MUST GO!

The Sun says: Taylor must go. Why? Because he must. England Manager Graham Taylor should take our advice and go. If you're reading this, Graham Taylor, our advice is go. That is our advice to the England Manager. You must go, Graham Taylor. The reasons are clear. You must go. Now is the time, Graham, for you to go.

(Continued until they appoint someone else and we say that he should go as well.)

ON OTHER PAGES: Why Taylor Must Go.

PETER McLIE

The World's Worst Columnist

HAVE you read this new book that says Prince Charles has got Aids?

It's been in all the papers, which makes me think it must be true.

But is it really the sort of thing we want to read about over our bacon-and-egg?

I think not.

☐ **THE world is in a terrible state, is it not?**

It makes you wonder where you can go for your holidays without being bombed or shot at, doesn't it?

But I think I have found just the place to take the wife and kiddies for their summer dip in the briny.

It is called Dubrovnik — and I must say the brochures make it sound just fine and dandy.

☐ *ISN'T it grand to see Wimbledon coming round again?*

Never mind that the strawberries are so cheap and that the sun is shining down day after day.

Here's my tip for the men's title — a young American called James Connors. I am reliably informed that he is the one to watch this year.

☐ DON'T you get exasperated when you try to cut a loaf of bread these days?

Half the time you're left with a crumbly piece that won't even fit in the toaster.

Here's my suggestion — a loaf of bread already cut conveniently into slices.

Just think of it! It would be the greatest thing since Fergie.

(You're fired, Ed.)

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

What a funny person Mr Hurd is, I am beginning to think. For several weeks he has been telling us all in the Cabinet that we did not need to take any notice of Denmark being against the Maastricht treaty. "It is only a small country on the edge of Europe," he kept saying.

But this morning he came in, in his toffee-nosed way, and said: "Prime Minister, I think we have cause to crack open the champagne." He then told me about the result of the referendum in Ireland. "They've voted 'yes' by a landslide. This means that Maastricht is home and dry," he said.

But, when I looked at my Daily Telegraph wall map, I couldn't help noticing that Ireland is a small country on the edge of Europe. When I pointed this out, Mr Hurd got very red in the face and said that all these things were relative, and that I shouldn't worry too much about the small print. "We must keep our minds firmly fixed on the light at the end of the tunnel," he said. It is a wonderful thing to have been to Oxford.

Tuesday

Today I was invited to the Test Match by my new friend Mr David Frost, who used to be on the television. There were lots of famous people in his box whom it was a pleasure for me to meet. Mr Frost remembered the names of all his guests, including me. I sat next to a very interesting man called Jagger, who is apparently very rich and who knows a lot about cricket.

Wednesday

Today is a very important day. I have called it "C Day" because I am going to unveil my famous Citizens Charter at a special press conference. I am glad to say that there is at least one member of the Cabinet who takes the Charter as seriously as I do — namely Mr Waldegrave. In fact, to hear him talk about it, you would think his job depended on it!

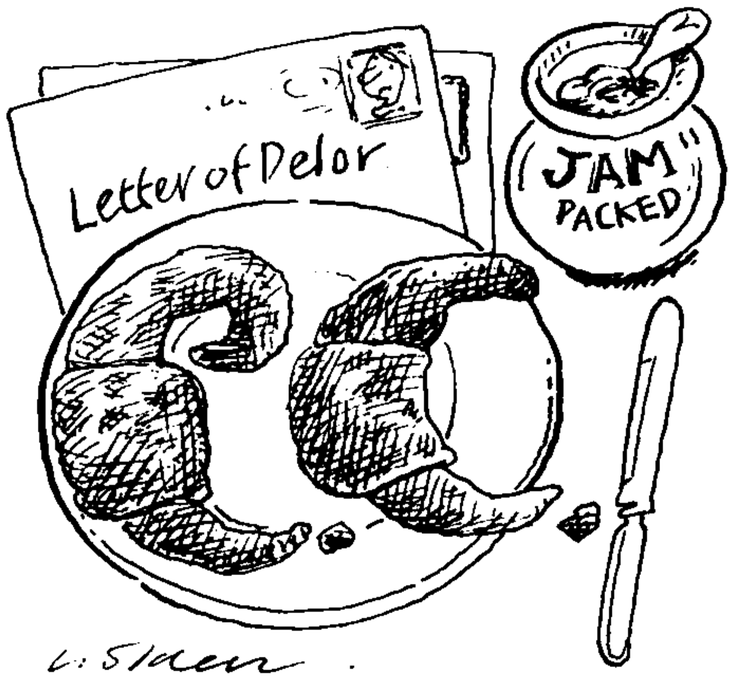
Unfortunately, when I asked him to hand out a copy of the Charter, which he has been working on so hard, he said that there wasn't an actual charter per se for us to look at yet, but that "a number of ideas are being kicked around" and that it was just a matter of fine-tuning, which might take a few more years.

I am beginning to think that there might be someone else who could do with some fine-tuning, not to say being kicked around — oh yes!

Thursday

This morning Mr Hurd came over from the Foreign Office to brief me on a very important visitor. "It is Monsieur Delors," he said, "the President of Europe. He is very unpopular with our backbenchers and it is very important that they should get the impression that we are taking a tough line with him."

Just then there was a ring at the door, and a little Frenchman wearing glasses came in. "Ah, Jacques, bonjour. Comment allez-vous?" said Mr Hurd, with a smile almost as considerably annoying as Mr Baker's used to be. "Nous sommes enchantés de vous voir."



They went on talking for some time in French and then eventually Mr Hurd shook hands with M. Delors, who left. When I asked Mr Hurd what their conversation had been about, he said: "It is very important not to offend him, as he is the most powerful man in Europe. I have told him that the British Government is all for him staying in office as long as he likes."

There is no doubt that Mr Hurd is a very clever diplomat.

Friday

I am not inconsiderably displeased with Mr Hurd, whose judgement in my judgement is possibly lacking in judgement.

After assuring me that backing M. Delors was the right thing to do, lo and behold, M. Delors attacked me in public saying all my ideas were wrong!

I put this to Mr Hurd in no uncertain terms, but he was quite unrepentant.

"You are at the centre of the stage now, John. What the French do is not important. You are the Big News."

But later on my wife Norman turned on the television to watch Jeremy Bates at Wimbledon and there was M. Mitterrand flying in to solve the Yugoslav crisis all on his own. "That could have been you, John," said Norman. "But it isn't. Mr Toffee-Nose Four-Eyes has sold you down the river again." I had no idea what she was talking about. I asked Mr Hurd on the telephone is he knew but we must have been cut off because the line went dead.

Sunday

Today is Mr Mellor's National Day of Music which he has organised with Jagger, the businessman I met at the cricket. What an amazing coincidence! Anyway, everyone has to play a musical instrument or make a contribution of a musical kind. When it was discussed at Cabinet there were a number of interesting suggestions made.

Mr Heseltine said to Mr Lamont: "I expect you'll be on the fiddle, Norma", to which he replied: "No, Michael, the organ is my instrument and, if Mrs Bottomley doesn't object, I'll be on it non-stop."

I had no idea he was such a versatile man. As indeed is my friend Mr Mellor. When asked what his contribution would be, he said he would be blowing his trumpet all day.

Monday

This week the woman I never mention becomes the Lady I never mention when she takes her seat in the House of Lords. She has even made a record of herself reading out "The Gettysburg Address". Of course I will not take any notice of this silly publicity stunt. Instead I will make a record of the Citizens Charter read out by myself. (Memo to Mr Waldegrave: The text must be finished a.s.a.p.)

I asked my wife Norman what sort of backing I should have on it. She said: "At the moment you should be grateful for any backing on anything."

PAY REVIEW BODY WINS HUGE RISE

by Our Economics Staff
Lunchtime O'Verpaid

THE three members of the Top People's Pay Review Board are to receive a 319 per cent salary increase, it was announced.

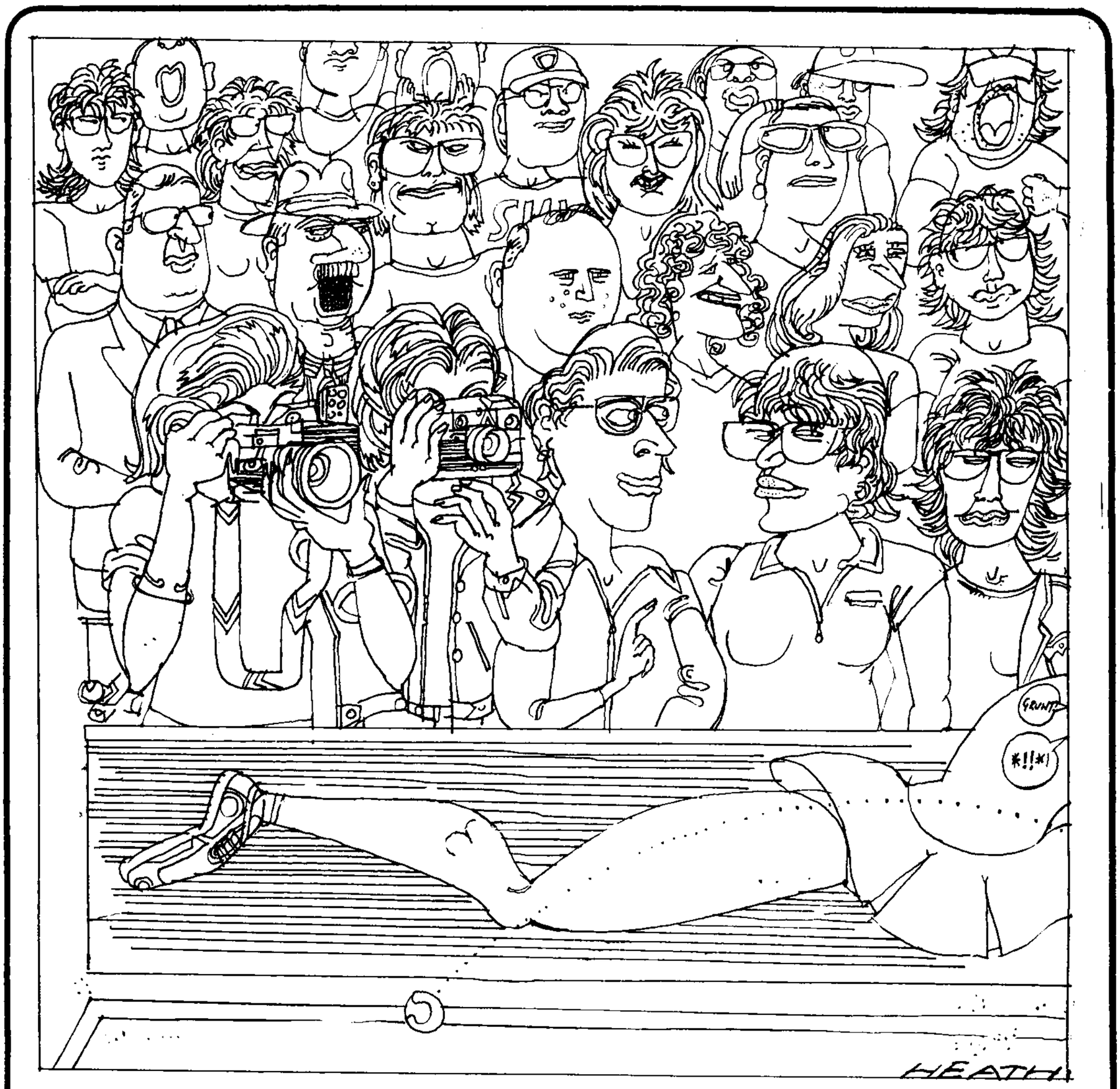
The pay award, which was recommended by the Top People's Pay Review Board, is to be back-dated to 1975.

Lines Written on the 80th Birthday of Mr Brian Johnston

by the Poet Laureate
Mr Ted Whohes

Red face. White hair.
Long scraggy neck.
MCC tie askew.
Old Johnners sits.
Old Johnners watches.
De Freitas bowls. No stroke
offered.
Sun beats down on grass.
Pakistan still 386-1.
Johnners munches cake.
Jaws clench. Crumbs spray.
Masticated raisins. Chew,
munch.
Cake gone.
Thwack. Cheer. Ball breaks
on wood.
Stumps splinter. Bails fly.
Old Johnners asleep.

Will this do? TH. 1992

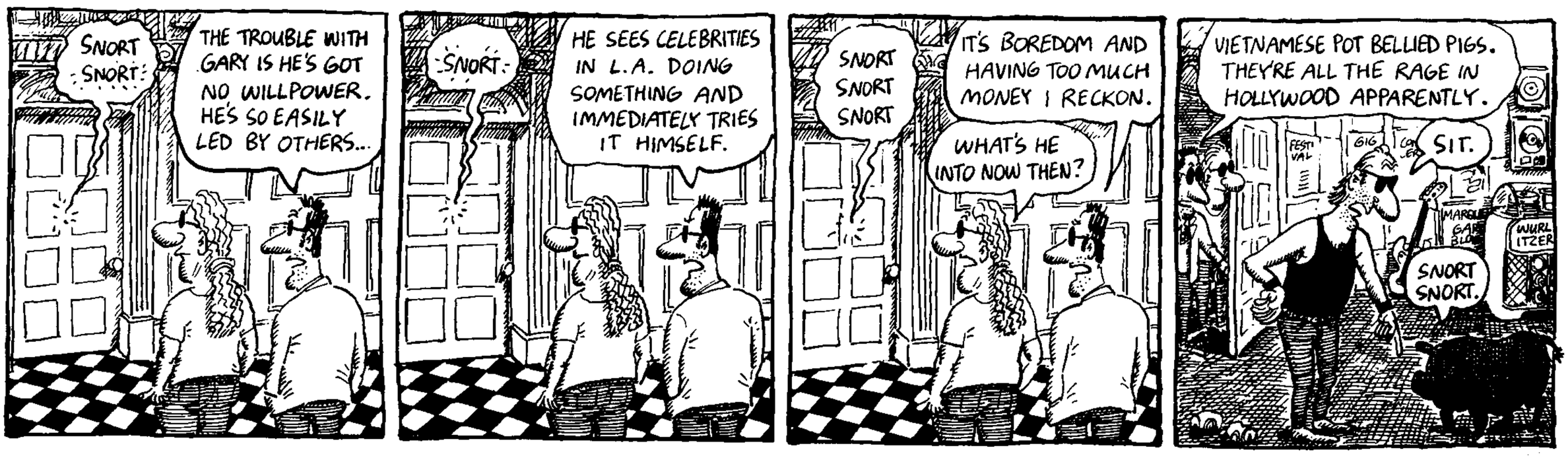


Great Bores Of Today.

"... standards have dropped appallingly it's partly to do with this corporate hospitality business they just get drunk in tents they're not interested in the tennis at all and the rest of the spectators are even worse the younger ones have no sense of occasion the way some of them dress is terrible the men take their shirts off it's more like a pop concert they're all eating and drinking the whole time they've got no manners and they shout awful things at the players whooping and wailing like banshees it used to be so quiet and people were respectful you could concentrate on the game of course I blame the players they were gentlemen in the old days Ken Rosewall and er... Lindsey Hassett and er... the little Spanish chap what was he called? Pablo Casales he never won but he always shook hands afterwards nowadays they're all such yobs that Big Mac man what a foul-mouthed individual he is so offensive why isn't he just sent off at the first swearword? he wouldn't do it again oh dear I think the person behind me has just been sick..."

Celeb

LIGGER


SNORT SNORT
THE TROUBLE WITH GARY IS HE'S GOT NO WILLPOWER. HE'S SO EASILY LED BY OTHERS...
SNORT
HE SEES CELEBRITIES IN L.A. DOING SOMETHING AND IMMEDIATELY TRIES IT HIMSELF.
SNORT SNORT SNORT
IT'S BOREDOM AND HAVING TOO MUCH MONEY I RECKON.
WHAT'S HE INTO NOW THEN?
VIETNAMESE POT BELLIED PIGS. THEY'RE ALL THE RAGE IN HOLLYWOOD APPARENTLY.
FESTI VAL
GIG
SIT.
WURL ITZER
SNORT SNORT.

Preview

COMING SOON

EL DISASTERO –

the £200 million soap to end them all.

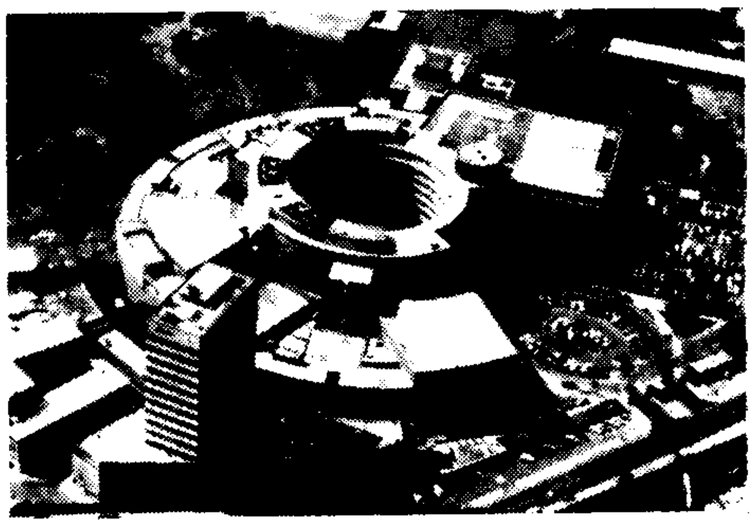
FOR YEARS thousands of craftsmen have been working round the clock to build a huge "working village" in the heart of London's Shepherds Bush.

Its purpose — to serve as the set for the most ambitious soap opera in history.

Forget *Neighbours, Dallas, EastEnders, The Late Show* — from this autumn the nation will be swept with *El Disastero* mania.

Last week the press were shown the lavish sets for the new soap, and introduced to the leading members of its fabulous cast who will become the household names of tomorrow:

"Dukey" Hussey, the white-haired old disabled war veteran, who has retired to El Disastero to spend his declining years cocking up the BBC.



His friend **"Johnny" Birt**, a chancer who has somehow drifted into El Disastero and ended up as the community's Mr Big.

"Granny Esther", the local busybody who sticks her nose into everybody's business. Her catchphrase "That's Life" will soon be on the nation's lips.

Al Yentob (real name "Botney"), the trendy, bearded layabout who dreams of being an "artist" — but all his efforts are doomed to failure.

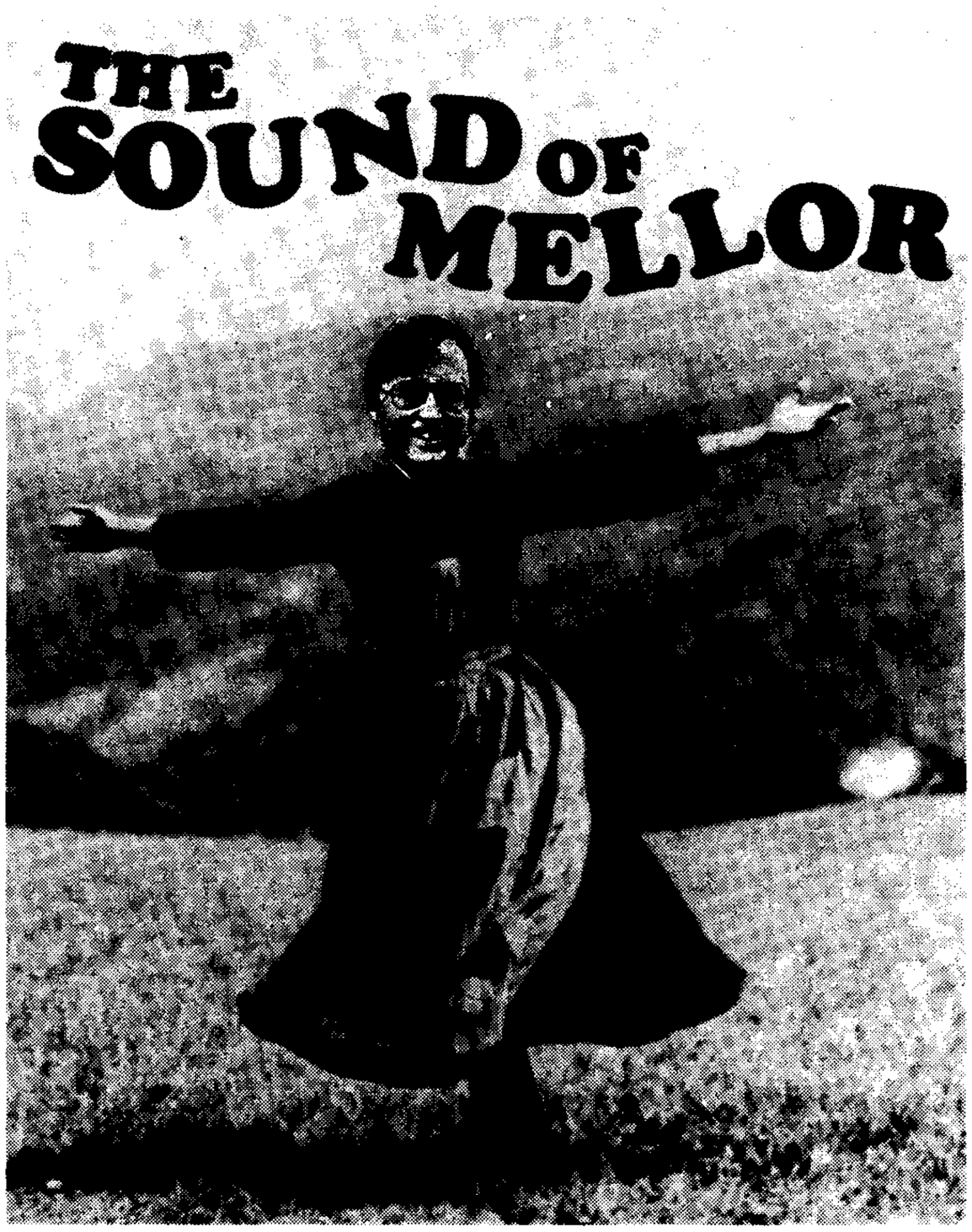
Sex interest centres on the antics of "young", leggy, 57-year-old Cockney starlet **Janet Street-Porter**, who scandalises the community with her unending stream of young lovers and terrible programmes.

"Mike" Checkland, the down-on-his-luck accountant who used to be a high flier, but now shuffles around waiting for the day when he will retire. Soon to be written out of the script.

And there's more sex too with sultry **Sarah Dunant** and her raunchy specs. She likes to hang about late at night chatting up weirdos when she thinks no one's watching (which they aren't).

(That's enough El Disastero. Ed.)

Now In Theatres Everywhere (for One Day Only)



by Majors and Heseltine

The most popular family musical of all time is to be revived, by the Department of National Heritage.

Starring the ever-youthful David Mellor and featuring such immortal hits as

How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maastricht?

Dough — A Sum Of Money I Give Myself

I Am 47, Going On 50

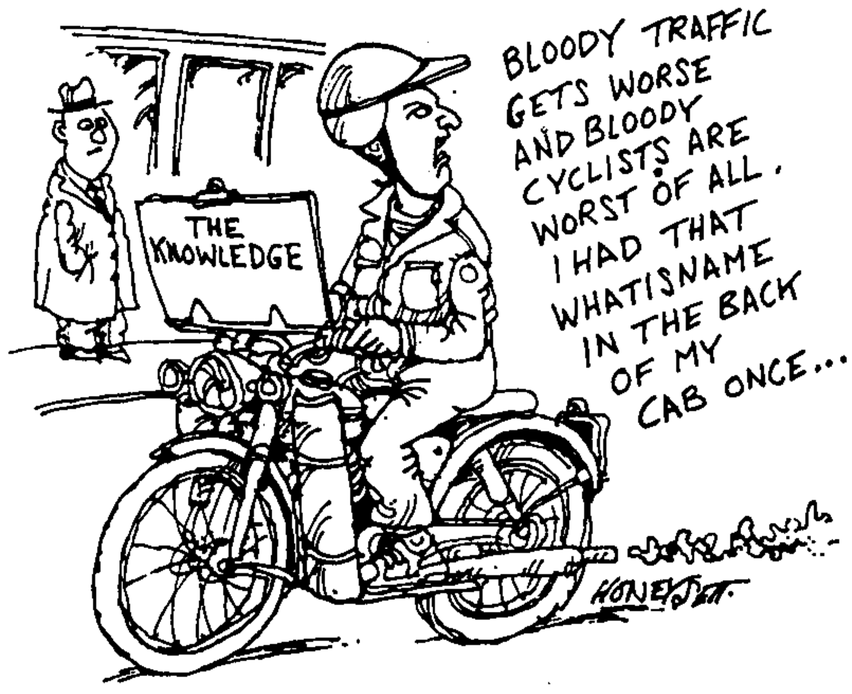
My Favourite Things (CDs and Football)

Eidelgit Climb Every Butter Mountain

and

The Tills Are Alive With The Sound Of Mellor

COMING NEXT — Wee Willy Waldegrave ("The Little Man") in Citizens Charternooga Choo-Choo

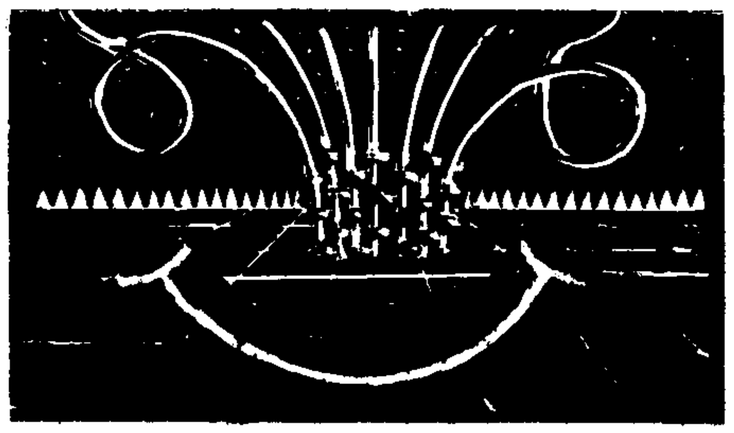

THE KNOWLEDGE
BLOODY TRAFFIC GETS WORSE AND BLOODY CYCLISTS ARE WORST OF ALL. I HAD THAT WHATISNAME IN THE BACK OF MY CAB ONCE...
HONEY

DIARY

In times like these, it is absolutely vital to maintain one's sense of humour. Though one has worries galore for both oneself and one's family — or, at least, one's sister's family, poor sausages! — one must always attempt to relieve each fresh upset with a jolly good laugh. No, there really is no tonic quite like laughter, except for tonic itself, of course, perhaps with just a touch of gin, about halfway up, thanks awfully, mmm, lovely, so kind.

Marriages don't seem to last quite so long as they did in my day. My own marriage lasted a good sixteen years, quite an example to one or two young people I could name but won't — actually three, if you count Anne. But of course they don't want to follow one's example, they don't want the responsibility, don't know what it means, they just want all the fun and glamour, and that's not good, it's not good at all. I have earned the respect of my subjects through sheer hard slog — two evening receptions a month, often attended by pompous little people, and endless behind-the-scenes work for some of my favourite charitable causes, including the Royal Mustique Sunworshippers Society and of course what I call the Friends of the Waleses. Of course, this endless round of what one might call "good works" makes one feel *utterly whacked* at the end of a busy day, but at the same time it makes a lot of little people who have admired one from a distance feel absolutely tip-top. A top-up? Did someone mention a top-up?

Items in my handbag: One Mary Quant lipstick; one small ready-mix; a cigarette holder and a pack of twenty menthol cigarettes; *Twenty Great Classics of French Literature* (Readers Digest Publications, 120pp); one more ready-mix, just a small one; one pair of false eyelashes plus glue; one pack of cards; one more pack of twenty cigarettes; a photograph of Charles and Diana taken at their wedding (!); a slightly larger ready-mix; a pocket German dictionary (for conversations with Marie-Christine!); a third pack of cigarettes — any brand — in case of emergency; free tickets to *Phantom of the Opera*, given to me by the composer, a Mr Webb, redeemable at any time from the box office for cash in hand; a memo to myself with my address clearly written in block capitals; one small tiara; one miniature presentation bottle of Glenfiddich (not absolutely full but very nearly).



HRH PRINCESS MARGARET

In the middle of summer, Christmas seems so very far away. But of course it is not. Six months can come around with surprising speed. And then six months later (a year in all) it is summer again. Six months after that, good Lord, if it isn't Christmas! Two Christmases in such a short time! But of course, summer is also always around the corner, just six months away. Sometimes it is frankly hard to know whether one is coming or going. A lot of people don't realise how hectic one's life is as a much-loved member of the Royal Family.

I mention this problem of Christmas as my sister, Her Majesty the Queen, is at present making an early start on her Christmas message to Great Britain and the Commonwealth.

Yes, let's not forget the Commonwealth, because the efforts of the senior members of the Royal Family are very much appreciated by our plucky subjects overseas, rather more so, one is almost tempted to add, than they are here, where the Press continues to whinge and whine. Did anyone mention wine? Mmmm. White or red, all the same to me, or even a bit of both.

Her Majesty the Queen has already gone through eight drafts. "Christmas is a time for the famil–" her first three began, and her next two began "Christmas is a time for reconciliati–". Frankly, I sympathise. These days, it is hard to know what Christmas really is for. But I did my bit to help.

"How about, 'Christmas is a time for splitting up'?" I suggested, but by the look on her face I could tell she felt that this didn't strike quite the right note of seasonal cheer. At the moment, she has settled for my other suggestion of "Christmas is a good six months away from summer, and I have noticed over the course of my travels that it is even closer to spring." She is perfectly sure that this message has universal appeal, and will act as an inspiration to our loyal subjects everywhere.

Current reading: books. I am the artistic member of the family. When I am in the mood to read something, I always turn to a book. There's a lot of reading in a book, sometimes almost too much, particularly in long books!

I am an invertebrate traveller, and also a deducted writer, being the artistic one in the family. Whenever I go abroad on an official visit, I fill my notebook with daily jottings, which I hope one day to publish. For instance, when I visited India for two months in 1977 I painted the following immensely vivid word-picture:

India: *A very well-run country, though on the large side. Food very different, though English dishes are available on request. Residents largely Indian but by no means unhelpful. Quite dusty in places. Heat disagreeable.*

I wonder if this is quite long enough for a travel book? Perhaps I could combine it with my word-picture of South America, which I visited in 1982:

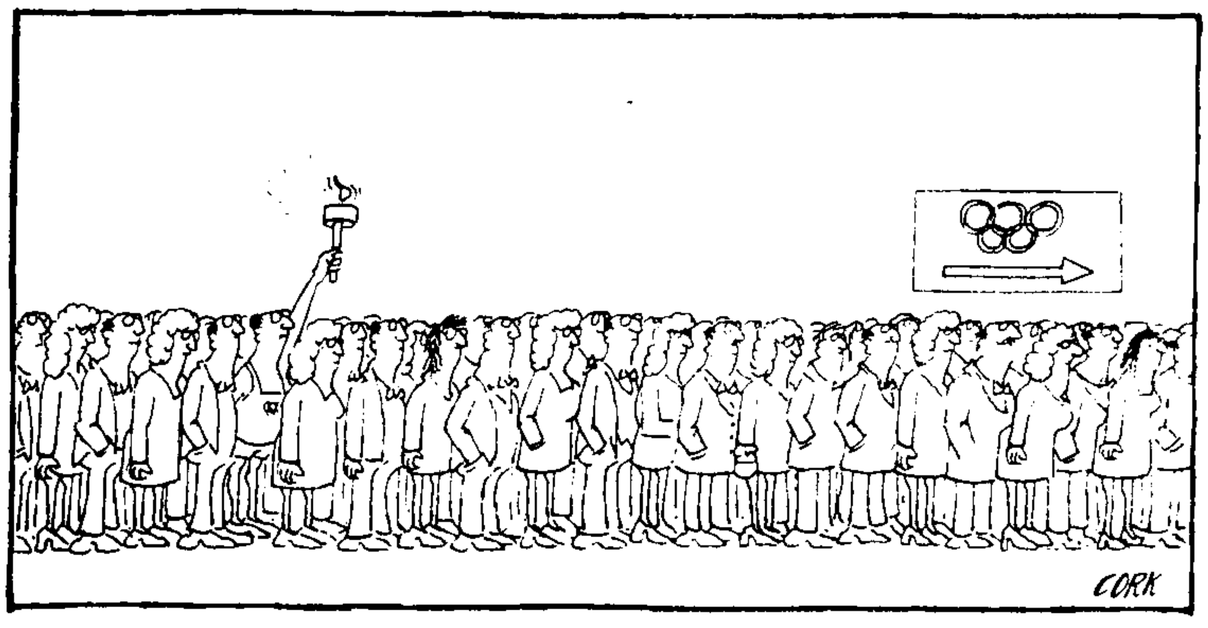
South America: *Some way to the South of America, as the name implies. Again, a very well-run country, and reasonably spacious. Excellent cocktails. Service prompt. Again, heat occasionally disagreeable, but everyone has a swimming pool, thank goodness! People very South American.*

One of my favourite cities in the world is Venice, and my affection for it is well attested in this prose-poem (1976):

Venice: *Watery but well-run, if a little cramped. Old-ish. Quite possibly the setting for "Death in Venice". Service excellent. Wine and food mainly Italian.*

If nothing else, I trust that these "leaves from my travels" have done something to dispel the misconception that we in the Royal Family are filistines!

Dignity. That's a word we don't hear employed by the younger members of the Royal Family these days. Yet in our day it was the watchword. By dignity I mean never standing up when one can sit down, never pouring one's own drink save in emergency, never going shopping without evacuating the shop of other people, and never giving a much-needed morale-booster to the poor, the elderly or the infirm without first making absolutely sure than an ample supply of flags has been distributed beforehand. As Walter Badger once said, Mystery is all. We in the Royal Family must be viewed through a glass, darkly. Mmmm, yes, a rum and coke should do the trick.



A Convict writes

As a doctor, I am sometimes asked: "Will you accompany me to the station, sir?"

The simple answer is: "Yes, of course, Officer. It's a fair cop" or *Arrestus medicalis fraudulens normalis*, as we bogus doctors call it.

If you are worried about your doctor giving you creosote to cure a headache, you are probably one of my patients.

© *A Bogus Doctor*

Literary Review

Nothing to brag about

Rules of Desire — Sex in Britain: World War I to the Present
Cate Haste
(Chatto, £14.99)
Crystal Rooms
Melvyn Bragg
(Hodder, £14.99)

HERE'S a fine pair. Cate Haste is, it says nowhere on her book, married to Melvyn Bragg. They've both just published shoddy books about sex. They make an illuminating comparison.

Cate Haste has written a leaden survey of changing mores. You can't make sex boring? Oh yes you can, you know, if your sentences are boring enough. Hers certainly are.

This is an exhausted plod through all the previous histories of sexual behaviour in modern times, with a couple of pages painfully ground out of every obvious milestone on the way. Havelock Ellis, Marie Stopes, Bertrand Russell, Radclyffe Hall, Vita Sackville-West, the invasion of the GIs, the Kinsey Report, the Lady Chatterley trial, *Fanny Hill*, the Profumo Affair, Mary Whitehouse, the 1967 acts, *Oz*, Cynthia Payne, Cecil Parkinson, Jeffrey Archer, Clause 28, James Anderton, *A Time to Dance*... here they all come again. Or nearly all. Hubby's own small contribution to prime-time pornography is passed over by Ms Haste in silence — nose compressed between finger and thumb, eyes averted, probably.

She thanks one of her friends for inspiring her "to concentrate on the personal". It was good advice and might have made for a more entertaining book, but she was not able to follow it. Indeed, with the help of lots of daft statistics ("One survey found that petting increased from 7 per cent among those born before 1904 to 22 per cent among those born 1904-1914..."), she has, rather remarkably, succeeded in removing all sense of human agency whatsoever.

Describing the current situation, she writes: "As the individual's obligation to conform to externally imposed concepts of moral duty has declined, a sense of moral duty towards self, which may or may not coincide with the community's interest, has increased."

Oh right. Sounds just like you, doesn't it? Or anybody else? This style of sub-academic writing effectively suppresses the human reality of what is described, shielding the writer, appearing much grander, more remote and authoritative than it actually is (to anyone who can stay conscious while trying to read such stuff, anyway). Knock as long as you like: nobody's home.

Melvyn, of course, is not so shy. He's been writing novels for 25 years now. But he first hit the big time with the sexed-up *The Maid of Buttermere* in 1987 ("the slow tidal wave of sex... he woke from a feigned sleep and moved once more inside her to feel the silk and flesh quick sway of this magically alert oblivion where two bodies were one body..." etc).

Then came the fantastic embarrassment of *A Time to Dance* ("Eyes closed, fingers inside you, reaching into the melting fluid rubbered silk — a relief map of mysteries — the eager clitoris, reeking of you, our tongues imitating the fingers..." — *Christ!*). And there was the TV version, finally granting us what we have so long wanted, a view of Ronald Pickup's parts.

Was Bragg abashed? On the contrary. He interpreted the catcalls as acclaim. In interviews he explained that Hardy, Lawrence, Updike, Henry Miller, Nabokov and other top class scribblers had met just the same reception when their erotic masterpieces were published. Hint, hint.

Rather impressively, Bragg's new novel, *Crystal Balls*, is even worse than its predecessor. But you wouldn't know it from most of the reviews. Bragg is still the central figure joining the arts and the media. No one wants to offend. In the *Times* Victoria Glendenning gave it half a page of soft soap: "...the pressure to communicate, like the lavishness, is appealing. There is material for three novels in *Crystal Rooms*." Other papers covered themselves differently. Despite the book's obvious newsworthiness, the *Telegraph* and the *Independent on Sunday* ran only oblique short pieces. The craven *Independent* and *Guardian* have somehow avoided reviewing it at all. No matter. It's in the bestseller lists now.

It shouldn't be. It's a mess, equally inept at the level of the single sentence and the whole plot, no less thoroughly sentimental than it is crass.

Because it is non-existent as art, Bragg's own gross tastes come through the more clearly: for Sancerre and other comforts of a lush London life in the media, for taking television seriously — and for icky sexual explicitness. Here we go again: "He bent over her and kissed her face, stroked her face, kissed her neck, her breasts, with his right hand opened her moist vagina and slipped fingers rapidly into it, working them sensuously round the contours and dark opening flesh which yielded and undulated very slightly... Jen reached up and took his hard penis in her hand. Moving gently so as not to excite him too much too soon, but enough for it to swell and gorge to a bruised helmet, she began to graze on him and he on her..."

Melvyn likes to keep his hand in, doesn't he? And this sex is supposed to be admirable to, lyrical like. The passages describing the sexual exploits of the fat, sozzled, cynical hack who is not Lynn Barber are aimed straightforwardly at degrading the woman as much as possible. She masturbates drunkenly at work. "Now she sat contemplating the cheap bog door in that most unbecoming posture — knickers round the ankles, gnocchi-filled stomach straining at the belt, thighs folding over the green stocking tops, skirt exposing too much, oh much too much tile-white bum already glued to the cheap pink plastic seat, and she was left with what had already become an increasingly regular alternative."

Although married, she goes to bed with a great fat Maxwell lookalike. "She gorged herself on it... Having tied him up, she took one of his hands and guided it, accompanied by her own, into her vagina. 'Christ! It's bloody enormous,' said Rudolf..."

This is the work of a dirty little boy and nothing more. There's a fair distance between this and the laborious, neutralised formulations of Cate Haste. Summarising the Annan Report, she writes: "More open portrayal of sexual themes might sometimes prove gratuitous but it could also advance understanding. The pursuit of artistic excellence might involve shock which was not necessarily a bad thing. There was a delicate balance..."

Perhaps. But rubbered silk and bruised helmets? No thanks.

Books & Bookmen

☐ THE Random House imprint Hutchinson has a best-seller on its hands in Robert Harris's Nazi thriller *Fatherland*. The book was nurtured, edited and published by Robyn Sisman, Hutchinson's editorial director.

Has her success been marked by a pay-rise, perhaps, or promotion?

Not quite. In the very week that *Fatherland* reached the top of the best-seller list — and just as Sisman was preparing to go on maternity leave — Hutchinson's managing director, Simon King, sacked her.

■ ANDREW MORTON'S book on Princess Di has been hailed as a great publishing success. In fact it illustrates perfectly the incompetence of the book business.

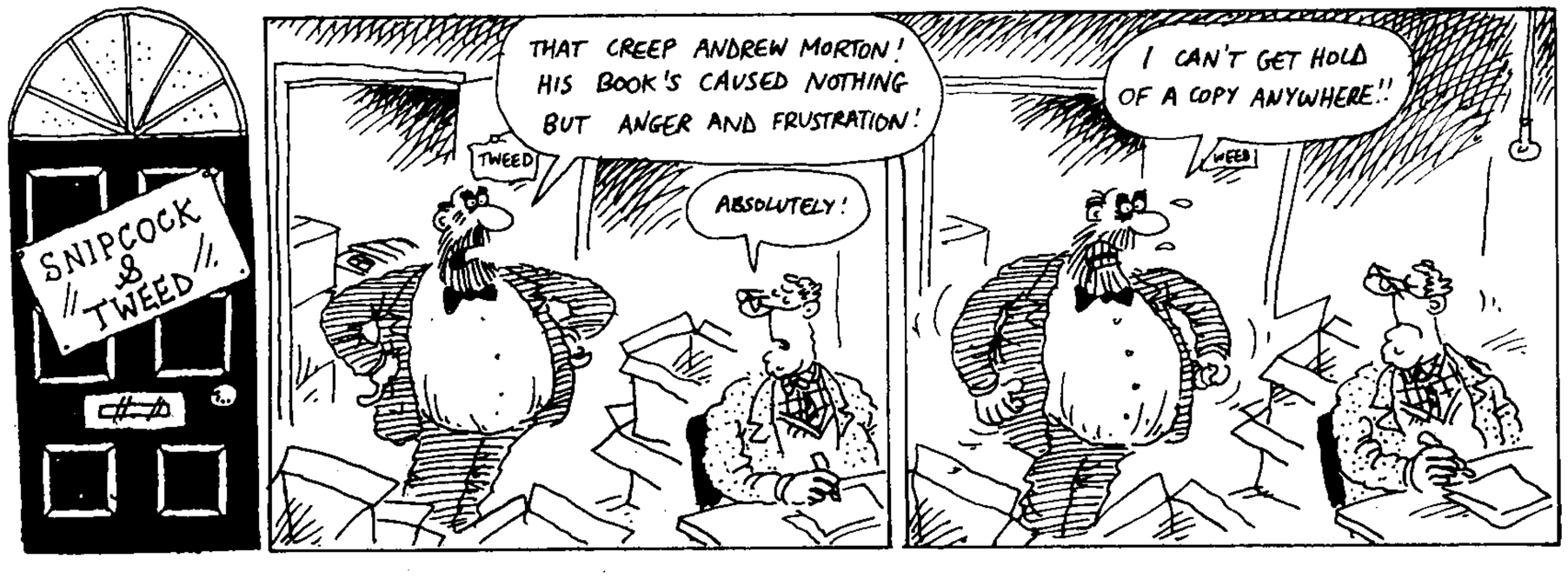
Here, after a long recession, was a chance for bookstores to make a fast buck. They had plenty of notice that the book was going to make headlines — advance publicity had been building up for months. All they had to do was order plenty of copies and collect the loot. But even this proved beyond them.

The number one dunce, unsurprisingly, is Terry Maher of Pentos, Britain's most useless bookseller. Though he claims to have a policy of "pile 'em high, sell 'em cheap", Maher's huge Dillons chain of shops ordered well under 1,000 copies of the book — which all sold within minutes.

Pan Macmillan, which distributed the book, hardly covered itself in glory either. Both it and Andrew Morton's publisher, Michael O'Mara, could see how pitifully low advance orders were. (A week before publication, just 18,000 of the 50,000 first print-run had been subscribed.) Why didn't the firm try to persuade the trade to order more? As Pan Macmillan's Martin Neild confessed to *Publishing News* magazine last week: "We certainly didn't get it right."

Hey ho. Back to the recession...

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
THAT CREEP ANDREW MORTON! HIS BOOK'S CAUSED NOTHING BUT ANGER AND FRUSTRATION!
TWEED
ABSOLUTELY!
I CAN'T GET HOLD OF A COPY ANYWHERE!!
WEED

IN THE BACK

NUCLEAR POWER

Hook, line and stinker

PERPETUATING the myth that the nuclear industry is set to explode into activity, British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) is to spend £33 million of public money investigating a wild and completely unrealisable dream.

The dream is to build a pressurised water reactor (PWR) seven miles from the sea and 250ft above sea level in Dumfries. Cooling water would be collected in a reservoir to be built in one of the most prolific spawning grounds for salmon in Scotland (experts believe 4,500 smolts would be lost every year), and after the water would then be discharged, warm and throbbingly radioactive, into the Solway Firth.

BNFL already has a medium-sized reactor (400 megawatts) at its Chapelcross station, near Annan, which was built in 1959 to produce plutonium for the weapons programme and, as a by-product, a little electricity. Now the demand for nuclear weapons has diminished, BNFL has had the bright idea of replacing the old station with a 1,500 megawatt PWR designed to generate electricity. It has carried out the first phase of a feasibility study at a cost of £3 million, and another £30 million has been earmarked for the next stage and will be spent over two or three years.

All this has meant that a less well-heeled body, the Solway Fishery Board, has had to spend thousands of pounds on an independent study to check the details and prepare to defend the salmon. In the area, the plan is hot news: a 146-page consultative document from BNFL has gone to its third edition as fishermen and landowners worry what it might do to their district.

The whole exercise is, of course, a nonsense. Scotland has enormous overcapacity in electricity and BNFL accepts that any electricity generated by the new PWR would have to be sold to England, which also has a surplus and happens to be thousands of pylons away across open country.

It is inconceivable that any government, even the present one, would agree to an official body (it has one shareholder, the energy minister) borrowing £3 billion to build such a station at such an unsuitable site. But this is in accordance with current nuclear industry policy: keep up everyone's spirits by pretending it's all about to start happening again.

Nuclear Electric is doing just that. Its chairman, John Collier, is talking of spending £3 billion on yet another station at Sizewell, the third. Then he returns to real life and sets about arranging the redundancy of 3,800 of his staff of 12,700, on top of the 1,600 who have been dispensed with already.

ENVIRONMENT

Something nasty in the woodshed...

THE Malaysian government is responding firmly to criticism from environmentalists that is wrecking the planet. "Hands off our forests" is its message to the rest of the world.

As part of the campaign, the government has accused those from the industrialised north of acting selfishly by wanting to protect their own luxurious lifestyles while preventing the simple forest-dwellers of Malaysia from "developing".

"The Penans have been semi-civilised," says Abdul Taib Mahmud, chief minister of the state of Sarawak. "There is no way to turn them back. They have learned to take sugar, to depend on western medicine and take ammunition for hunting."

The idea now is to "develop" the forest — take the natives out of a harsh environment and give them all the benefits of civilisation, such as sugar, ammunition and health care, that they need.

"[Logging] has benefited a lot of people," Taib Mahmud adds.

Funnily enough, one man who has benefited greatly is Taib Mahmud himself. He and his relatives own about one third of Sarawak's timber concessions and are "developing" (i.e. logging) at a rapid rate, moving the forest-dwelling Penan into government-built shanty towns. Unable to wait for a reward in heaven for this altruism, Taib Mahmud has decided to take earthly treasures in the form of a cream-coloured Rolls Royce — living proof that development really can enrich the lives of Malaysian citizens.

Another man whose life has been enriched is Senator Tiong Hiew King. He, like the Penan, depends on the forest for his livelihood, the only difference being that he owns extensive timber concessions and they don't. The concessions earn him more than £100 million a year.

James Wong Kim, Sarawak's minister for tourism, believes environmentalists are inciting forest-dwelling natives to rebellion, and is demanding that they keep their hands off Sarawak. He, meanwhile, has his hands on a sizeable part of the state, owning one of the largest logging concessions. While it is being felled, he plays.

Meanwhile, Malaysia's city-dwelling politicians aim to "develop" Sarawak, in much the same way as the Philippines has been developed by the stripping of its rainforests — the kind of development that resulted in fatal mudslides around Ormoc last year.

Oddly enough, despite this "development" that has logged half the state, most people in Sarawak still have "roughly the same standard of living as 20 years ago," according to an International Tropical Timber Organisation report.

POLLUTION

Tangled up in Notts

PATRICK McLOUGHLIN, Tory MP for West Derbyshire, seems rather baffled by all this pollution business that has sprung up over the last few years.

Ratcliffe on Soar power station in Nottinghamshire is to be fitted with de-sulphurisation equipment, which will consume 300,000 tons of limestone every year. As this will come from quarries in his constituency — and on the fringes of a national park — McLoughlin promised that the stone would go by rail. That was before the election. Now that he has been returned to Parliament with an increased majority, it seems the limestone will go by road.

The whole point of fitting de-sulphurisation equipment to the power station is to reduce emissions of noxious gases. Using lorries instead of trains to move the stone will annually produce 5,000 tonnes more carbon dioxide; 100 tonnes more nitrous oxide; 45 tonnes more carbon monoxide; and 23 tonnes more hydrocarbons. One train a day would carry all the stone needed — compared with 100 lorry journeys.

Since McLoughlin was formerly a junior minister at the transport department, he should surely appreciate that using lorries will almost negate the effect of the power-station filters, substituting for one nasty gas a whole load of others. But then his period at the DoT would also have taught him that the need to satisfy the ever-hungry road lobby overrides all other considerations — including keeping pre-election promises.

FLOTATIONS

In the Black?

LAST WEEK'S share offer by the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraphs* was something of a damp squib. Most analysts, warning the public to look for value for money, claimed that the shares were overpriced.

One item that seems to have been overlooked by the media, however, can be found on page 80 of the *Telegraph* prospectus and concerns Peterborough Court, the premises at South Quay on the Isle of Dogs which the daily and Sunday titles recently vacated in favour of Canary Wharf round the corner.

In one of those strange deals that Olympia & York, the Canary Wharf developer, made with tenants, the *Telegraph*, when it moved to the wharf, had its South Quay lease assigned to O&Y. Normally this might seem like a good deal. But O&Y is now in administration, and should the property giant founder the lease and its subsequent payments will revert back to the newspaper company.

The South Quay building has 102,793 sq ft of empty space, 193 years to run on its lease and the longterm liability for the rental, should O&Y go under, rests clearly with the *Telegraph*. So far this uncomfortable fact has not been dwelt on by the analysts. But with American Express suing O&Y over Canary Wharf commitments, Texaco stalling about moving in and the Thames riverbus in danger of going under, this must be a worrying time for Conrad Black and his *Telegraph* minions.

MERGERS

A very Finnie business...

THIS week sees the merger of Finnie & Co, chartered accountants, with the larger firm of Stoy Hayward. For Finnie it was a lucky break that anyone should want to merge with them at all.

Documents in the possession of *Private Eye* show that there were serious irregularities in the way one Finnie partner, Christopher Benbow, conducted his affairs within the firm. This resulted in a partners' meeting on 12 February which effectively suspended Benbow but for legal reasons refused to accept his resignation.

Benbow was clearly used to generating large fee income. The trouble was that he could not clearly discern the need to keep the financial records straight, and he confused fee income properly due to the partnership with his own. The documents show that the fee income Finnie had billed out but which went to Benbow personally may be as high as £750,000.

When this state of affairs was discovered, Finnie held a meeting with Barclays, which agreed to a temporary increase in the firm's overdraft facilities. The minutes of that meeting claimed that "for a number of years, Mr Benbow had been consistently unprofessional in his conduct and dealings with both clients and the partnership. It appears that these dealings had produced considerable financial advantage for Mr Benbow personally with a consequent loss to the partnership".

Benbow helped many clients personally. One of these was The Body Shop International plc. Benbow arranged for Finnie to settle personal credit card bills for two Body Shop directors, Gordon Roddick and Stuart Rose, and a total of some £27,800 was paid through Visa accounts maintained by Finnie.

Jane Reid, the Body Shop's company secretary, told the *Eye* that these payments were personal to Mr Roddick and Mr Rose and that Body Shop did not reimburse Finnie & Co for them. Ms Reid added: "Some things in international business you don't want to go through your accounting department. I'm sure that this happens all the time."

What is clear, however, is that Finnie, as Body Shop's auditor, should have picked up this item up during the 1988/89 audit and sorted the matter out with Benbow there and then. But the matter appears to have been overlooked and must surely cast some doubt as to the veracity of the Finnie certification of the Body Shop audit.

Benbow and the Body Shop have a very close relationship, it now emerges. Unknown to the other Finnie partners, Benbow had, through a Mrs Ash, secured the franchise to a Body Shop in Boca Raton, Florida, and he still has his franchise through a company called HWH Inc.

A Mr G Warren, a senior partner at Finnie & Co, told the *Eye*: "We do not as a policy discuss the affairs of the partnership with others. Mr Benbow has moved on to pursue other business interests." Lucky man.

The Corley saga, Part 94

FOLLOWERS of the never-ending Ged Corley saga (*Eyes passim*), Greater Manchester Police's biggest-ever corruption probe, will have to wait at least until the end of August when the case against three former and current GMP officers, charged with perjury and perverting the course of justice, reconvenes at Wakefield magistrates' court.

Events *outside* the court at the first hearing on 15 June, however, were more in keeping with the simmering level of violence endemic to the four-year story. One of the accused ex-officers, former GMP inspector Peter Jackson, was approached by a time-served member of Manchester's criminal fraternity who warned him: "It's your turn now. See what it's like when you get 17 years. I'm going to get your address, we're going to sort you out."

The jailbird, who has served four years for armed robbery, was of course referring to the 17-year sentence handed out to former Manchester constable Ged Corley in 1989 for supplying weapons to criminals following an investigation which Jackson led.

Corley was released four months later and recently won £230,000 compensation from Greater Manchester police for wrongful imprisonment. With impeccable good taste he celebrated in style by splashing out £20,000 on a green Rolls Royce and taking it on a run to Blackpool. Corley also found time to take a break from the high-life and turn up at court in Wakefield where he ignored Jackson while accompanying members of his entourage gesticulated threateningly and shook their fists at the former inspector.

This came as something of a surprise to the beleaguered Jackson who could be excused for having expected Corley and Co to shower him with roses and bottles of champagne. After all, if it hadn't been for Jackson's reservations about Corley's prosecution, demanding that GMP consider fresh evidence, Corley would still be breaking rocks at Her Majesty's pleasure.

Hackney cabal

THE MYSTERIOUS postponement of the sentencing of a self-confessed drug dealer and her son from the notorious Sandringham Road "frontline" will add fuel to the flames of speculation sweeping Hackney.

The "crack shop" run by Pearl Cameron is at the centre of accusations of drug dealing by police from the borough's Stoke Newington "Supernick" being investigated by Knacker's elite (ie can-do-joined-up-writing) anti-corruption squad, CIB2.

Det Supt Ian Russell, who heads up "Jackpot" — CIB2's improbable codename for its massive inquiry — is apparently most concerned to be thorough. To this end he has tapped the telephones of officers under investigation and has taken hundreds of statements from those alleging police malpractice. A preliminary report is expected at the DPP's office in the autumn and charges are likely to be recommended against at least two "rotten apples" from the Stoke Newington barrel.

Given that the allegations "Jackpot" is investigating came to light almost by accident following the arrest of one copper on entirely unrelated charges of VAT fraud, the question the borough's groaning poll taxpayers really need answering is: "How far does the corruption go?"

For instance, persistent rumours have circulated for years that the owners of illicit and even licensed premises in Hackney have to provide "big drinks" to Knacker for the privilege of staying open. Now it seems that "Jack" Russell may have stumbled across evidence of this as he picks his way gingerly through the tangled web of corruption at Stoke Newington.

One man whose conviction for drug dealing may have to be reopened as a result of new evidence from the "Jackpot" inquiry told Russell that he was planted with crack cocaine after phoning Scotland Yard about pay-offs by nightclub owners. Russell has questioned others about these rackets, but is thought unlikely to take action.

Two officers allegedly implicated in the scandal have been named under parliamentary privilege by local MP Brian Sedgemore, but the barrister-turned MP is notoriously cautious. Lawyers acting for some of those claiming to have been planted by cops from Stoke Newington are adamant that many more coppers are involved, and local police watchdog Hackney Community Defence Association have published a list of more than 40 against whom accusations of drug dealing or planting have been made.

In his early-day motions naming the officers, Sedgemore has called for an independent inquiry. Could it be that he doesn't believe Knacker's investigations into his own affairs will be thorough enough?

The boyo in blue

YUSEF ABDULLAHI is one of the men known as the Cardiff Three, whose controversial conviction for the 1988 murder of a prostitute were recently questioned by *Panorama*. His younger brother Malik is now facing charges of affray, threatening behaviour and possessing an offensive weapon.

Malik's case involves an allegation that he attacked five police officers. It is worth noting, however, that despite having offered to make a statement after the incident in March he was only recently arrested *en route* for his holiday in France.

The key witness in this case is a particular detective constable. In 1991, Malik was arrested and charged with the burglary of a local shop. He spent six weeks remanded on bail and under curfew, while his lawyers tried to get copies of security tapes showing the theft. When the videos were finally forthcoming it was clear that the burglar — although wearing a balaclava — was a clean shaven white man. Naturally, Malik, a black man with a moustache, was more than a little irritated by the whole charade, and after the CPS dropped the case he made a complaint against the officer responsible for bringing the charges — the very same detective constable.

The DC's association with the Abdullahi family goes back even further than that: to the case of the Cardiff Three itself. In June 1988, more than four months after the brutal stabbing of prostitute Lynette White on Valentine's night, a fellow prostitute in a drunken stupor accused Yusef Abdullahi and another man, Steven Miller, of the murder. It was then that the DC in question claimed to recall a "casual chat" with Yusef less than two weeks after the killing, in which he claimed Yusef admitted to knowing more than he was telling about the crime.

Despite the obvious importance of this snippet to the massive hunt being conducted by the local CID, the DC made no report of his "casual chat", no record of it in his notebook, and did not question Yusef any further about the business until June.

End of the line for BREL

YET AGAIN the Government has turning a great British industry into a mere pimple on the face of a foreign concern.

In June it allowed Trafalgar House to sell its 40 percent stake in British Rail Engineering Ltd (BREL) to the other 40 percent shareholder, ASEA Brown Boveri. A total of 2,008,336 shares were sold for £1 (yes, that's *one* pound), giving ABB control of the company. (Curiously, BREL chairman John Darby recommended employees owning the other 20 percent not to sell out to ABB, "as the price per share is virtually nil".)

Such a huge, humiliating devaluation was no mean feat for the Tories considering the strength of the tradition inherited by BREL. Ever since the first steam locomotive took to the rails in 1804, Britain led the world in building trains — until Margaret Thatcher was shunted into Downing Street, that is. Not only did she boast of never travelling by train, but she had a vested interest in people consuming vast quantities of oil by using cars.

Britain's last world-beating puffer was the High Speed Train of the 1970s (it's the quickest diesel train and provides the fastest commuter service in the world). It was a fitting continuation of the lineage of spectacular UK train designs, the engineering tradition which had passed into BR's engineering subsidiary, BREL.

BR researchers next turned their attention to another pioneering design: an electric train that travelled so fast it needed a tilting body to stop passengers being thrown to the side when it went round curves. The Thatcher government starved that project of cash — apparently it was impractical and too ambitious. Five years later the Italians brought out a high-speed electric train that tilted as it went round curves.

And so in the 1980s the world's train builders stopped looking to Britain for inspiration. BREL was then decimated, privatised, and decimated again (see *Eyes passim*). Now that it is safely in foreign hands, there is little chance that Britain will ever again lead the world in train design and manufacture.

That the engineering tradition that produced the Rocket, City of Truro, Mallard and the High Speed Train is now worth no more than 0.00005 pence a share merely adds insult to injury.

Absolutely freightful

MINISTERS have suffered a minor embarrassment in their drive to let private companies run freight trains over British Rail tracks.

After Tiger Rail — a pioneer of private railfreight — went bust earlier this year, Railfreight Distribution took over some of its business. Railfreight Distribution is part of BR, so the change amounted to *nationalisation*.

Other long-distance services formerly run by Tiger Rail fared better. Not only did they remain in private hands, but they were transferred from rail to road. Trebles and greenhouse gases all round!

ESPIONAGE

Eye vs. Spy

JOHN MAJOR'S unconvincing denial that he knew about the results of surveillance by GCHQ and the "security services" of Robert Maxwell has not been helped by the curious links between those appointed to mop up Maxwell's mess and the security services.

Sir Robert Clark, who was knighted under the last Labour government, is chairman of Mirror Group Newspapers. His anxious appeals to cut all connections with the murky Maxwell past contrast sharply with his own past.

Clark started his career in the Special Operations Executive, the active arm of British intelligence in Europe during the last war. He was captured as a spy by the Italians and sentenced to death, his sentence being commuted at the last minute. After the war he went to Cambridge, and later joined Slaughter and May, the City law firm where Clark's old SOE boss Hilary Scott was senior partner.

Like so many clever City solicitors, Clark graduated to merchant banking and joined Hill Samuel, known as the "spy bank" for its close connections with intelligence. It was as head of corporate finance there that Clark first came into business contact with Robert Maxwell. He supervised the flotation of Pergamon Press, and thus Clark's connections with Maxwell extend back well before the famous Board of Trade denunciation of Maxwell not being fit to exercise stewardship over a public company.

Clark went on to higher and higher things. He became chairman of Hill Samuel, a director of the Bank of England and collected a string of other important directorships: Rover, the Trustee Savings Bank and IMI, among others — but he never lost his association with or affection for the fat publisher. *(See 'Slicker'.)*

Even closer to the intelligence services than Sir Robert Clark is the man appointed by the Government to search out the money Maxwell plundered: Sir John Cuckney. In his book *Spycatcher*, former MI5 officer Peter Wright names Cuckney as the "tough no-nonsense officer" who supervised the training of MI5 recruits. "He was altogether different from the average MI5 officer," wrote Wright. "He refused to submit to the monotony of the dark pinstripe, preferring bolder styles."

Wright says he was impressed by Cuckney's advice on the legal responsibility of the intelligence services. "The security service cannot have the normal status of a Whitehall department," he quotes Cuckney as saying, "because its work often involves transgressing propriety or the law." Cuckney set out the "11th Commandment" of MI5 — "Thou shalt not get caught".

It was "no surprise" to Peter Wright when Cuckney left MI5 for business. In recent years, his name has seldom left the headlines. He was chairman of the Mersey Port Authority when the authority "took on" the dockers, and was chairman of Westland Helicopters during the crisis which led to the resignation in 1986 of then defence minister Michael Heseltine.

During the recent row over arms sales to Iraq and the victimisation of the arms company Astra, Cuckney has been specially prominent. He was a director of the Midland Bank, whose mysterious consultant Stefan Kock was at one time the only director of Astra; and he was chairman of 3i, the investment company which forced the changes in the Astra board soon after Astra's take-over of PRB, the Belgian company which made propellant for the Iraqi supergun.

If there are any dark secrets that explain how Maxwell was able to steal so many hundreds of millions of pounds so easily while he was being observed and spied on by the Government's intelligence services, Sir John will surely flush them out.

In the City

BOARD members of Mirror Group Newspapers are mostly a sorry and shabby crew whose legal and moral positions, not to mention their reputations, have not been improved by forcing chairman Ernie Burrington and incompetent finance director Lawrence Guest to walk the plank in a management style reminiscent of their old paymaster, Cap'n Rob.

Instead of falling on their expensive pens, the remaining senior directors have chosen to claim — incredibly — that somehow it was not their fault that Robert Maxwell pillaged the pension funds and corporate treasury.

While Burrington and Guest have been sacrificed for counter-signing cheques to Maxwell's benefit, Vic Horwood, boss of the Scottish papers, has been confirmed as chief executive, despite the view of insiders that he was only marginally less culpable than his two boardroom buddies.

Yet only weeks before the board was reviewing three options for Horwood, none of which included becoming chief executive, given his similar inaction when, like Burrington, he was told by Guest about transfers of *Mirror* cash.

A proposal that Horwood should be sent back to Scotland was discussed. But replacement chairman Sir Robert Clark and others decided that instead of being moved sideways, Horwood's achievements in standing up to Maxwell merited promotion.

When grilled at board meetings last month by the handful of directors not so closely involved as to what they did to protect the shareholders and pensioners, Horwood, Clark and the three other non-executive directors said nothing in private that could save them in public.

Clark, an old friend of Maxwell, who still maintains there was no previous reason to believe he was a crook, whined about the lack of evidence. So too did Alan Clements, the former ICI finance director recruited by Maxwell's merchant bankers Samuel Montagu to create the impression of fearless independence on the MGN board.

Both these heroes were paid around £30,000 a year to be watchdogs turned lapdogs. When asked what he considered he had to do for this, Clements replied merely to be a non-executive director — a role he carried out equally impressively at Brent Walker.

When asked why the audit and remuneration committees, crucial elements in the supposed plan to curb Maxwell and his cronies, had never met until Cap'n Rob went over the side, Clements lamely excused this inaction by saying there was no chairman to summon a meeting. It did, however, meet post-Maxwell to vote Horwood (£45,000) and Burrington large pay rises — for a job well done in helping to lose £421 million.

Clark and Clements totally ignored the prospectus commitment that the audit committee should meet to consider MGN's interim statements. Last year's was issued without being reviewed by the committee. If it had met, the committee might have learned from Guest of his concerns about Maxwell "deposits". It might have been able to force Maxwell to pay the money back, as Maxwell Communication Corporation directors did. But then looking at the men concerned this looks most unlikely.

Clark was a Maxwell man and chose not even to confront him at the board meeting when told by Guest of the supposed "deposits" with US banks. Clements merely echoed Clark's line.

Lord Williams — provided with a Jaguar Sovereign saloon to assist in his duties — was another Maxwell acolyte. His explanation was that he was only there for his contacts with the Labour Party. That was also how Maxwell hagiographer Joe Haines explained why he had been appointed.

It can be seen just how fearsome and independent were the supposed guardians of the famed MGN ring fence erected by Samuel Montagu.

That they feel no need, like Lord Carrington, to do the honourable thing and resign is the measure of these shameless stooges. They should and must all go. The only question is who among the shareholders can force them out. For it is clear that the banks and administrator John Talbot, controlling the Maxwell 54 percent share stake, prefer stability to corporate governance or even justice.

IT IS perhaps not entirely surprising that the Serious Fraud Office passed on investigating the £240 million *Mirror* flotation and encouraged the department of trade and industry to step in. MGN's solicitors were Clifford Chance, long-time Maxwell advisers. The new director of the SFO is George Staple, until March a senior partner in Clifford Chance.

THE ARRESTS of Kevin and Ian Maxwell together with Larry Trachtenberg should not have surprised readers of the last *Eye* which, unlike everyone else, did not subscribe to the SFO's public posture that arrests were "several months" away.

Considerable speculation, however, surrounds the position of key Maxwell facilitator Michael Stoney, whose name was not on the collar-feeling list. Stoney, unlike the Maxwells, is now helping the administrators track down assets. Could it be that he may also in time come to help the SFO in return for immunity? After all, as Guinness showed, a little inside help can make all the difference.

JUDGES may be starting to take fraud seriously (witness the 10 years to Peter Clowes and two years to market ramper Len Lee), but they still do not treat insider dealing as a serious crime. How otherwise can the failure of Judge Laughland to jail any of the four City players convicted in the biggest ever insider dealing trial be explained?

Stockbroker David Gray merited only a suspended sentence, a £10,000 fine plus £10,000 towards costs. Fund manager Mark Riding was fined £10,000 plus £5,000 costs. Fund manager William Liggins was fined £5,000 plus the same in costs. And merchant bank analyst Cathy Rowlands (who once threatened to sue the *Eye*) was given a conditional discharge plus £2,000 towards costs.

Such leniency — despite being found guilty of "greedy cynicism", "brazen defiance" of the law and operating a "web of illegality". And after incurring the cost of a seven-week trial.

Perhaps it is time British judges took the line of their federal counterparts in New York, who do not see insider dealing as a victimless crime. In almost every case judges automatically have jailed for at least a year even those who pleaded guilty to insider dealing. As Judge Lasker declared when jailing Ivan Boesky for three years: "The time has come when it is totally unacceptable for courts to act as if prison is unthinkable for white collar defendants."

But then we are so much more sensitive to the sufferings of men in suits and their families, as witness the outcry over the poor Maxwell boys being taken from their beds before 7am.

HOW, it might be asked, could so many supposed City experts be so wrong about GPA and its $1 billion flotation? After weeks of relentless puffery, including stories about the number of shares on offer having to be increased to meet the burgeoning US demand, the Sunday before the Irish aircraft leasors had to admit it was unwanted the forecast was unanimous. "GPA taking off" (*Sunday Telegraph*). "Right time for GPA" (*Sunday Times*). "Chocks away for GPA" (*Observer*). "GPA airborne" (*Independent*).

All of which perhaps shows how much reliance is placed on PR men (Alan Parker of Brunswick) and advisers (Schroders, Goldman Sachs, Nomura) who with mega-fees to earn are paid to talk their book. Once again the flaks, not the facts, were the message.

PHILIP Green, the man they love to hate, is clearly not entirely without friends. After a week in which Amber Day shares fell a third to 38p no fewer than three Sunday newspapers (*Times*, *Independent* and *Mail*) miraculously discovered a possible price boosting bid from rivals In Shops.

Meanwhile Green's money-lending friend and Amber Day shareholder Tony Schneider has been expressing displeasure about the *Eye*'s revelations of his criminal past. "This was all a long time ago. I'm a respectable businessman now," he declared. "If I find out who is behind this I shall have to give them a good slapping." No empty threat from a man once acquitted of demanding money with menaces from Gerald Greenfield, managing director of rag traders S. Collier.

'Slicker'

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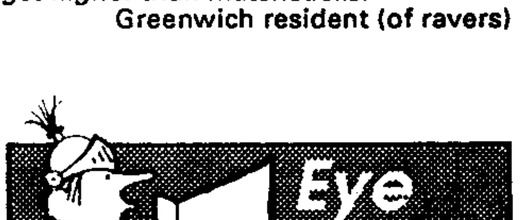
Greenwich resident (of ravers)



WHERE IS Alexanderina Crawford? (0983) 854825.

FLINT MURDER 1976. The silence is deafening. C.T.

HOW MANY lawyers "sabotage" civil L-Aid clients for political/discriminatory reasons. Pt 3.

SPEECHWRITING — see EYE HELP.

TRAPP VECTOR (arc'd): 108, ab? Hck-S.

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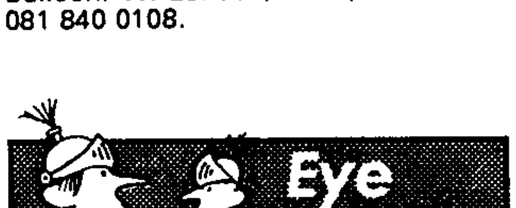

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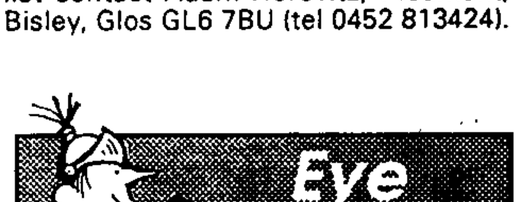

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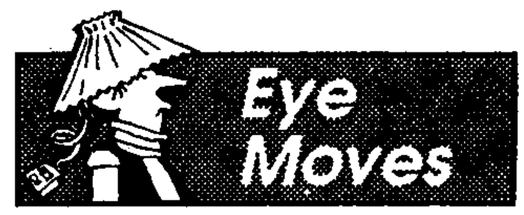

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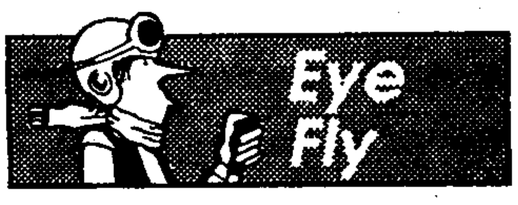

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CENTRAL LONDON professional lady 39 seeks similar gentleman for fulfilling and fun relationship. Box 6397.

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BLOKE, 38, YOUNG at heart and in appearance, seeks girl, 25-35 for friendship, possibly more. Derbys/Notts/Leics. Music, cinema, travel. Box 4197.

INCREDIBLY NICE CHAP, 24, too affectionate for his own good, would love to share friendship, cuddles and country walks with someone special. Box 4297.

MAKE LOVE WITH ME. Arty male, 26, seeks imaginative woman for atmospheric seductions: Mozart and dim lights or Pink Floyd and ice cubes; let's try it and see. Intelligent friendship a bonus. Box 4397.

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HANDSOME TALL professional black guy, 23, n/s, seeks confident female companion to share laughs, travels, romance? South. Box 4597.

TALL SOLVENT divorced professional male, 40, seeks special lady to put sparkle back in life. London/Surrey area. Photo/phone no. appreciated. Box 4697.

AMUSING MANCUNIAN man, early 30s, good lifestyle, seeking slim, independent female who's able to laugh (and cry!). N/S preferred. Box 4797.

ATTRACTIVE SLIM blonde leggy bronzed female (26) requires professional gentleman for passionate affair. Photo please. Box 6297.

SENSUAL BRUNETTE with laughing green eyes, just back in the UK, seeks best friend and lover for happy ever afters. Preferably aged 32-42, he too must be bright, humorous, romantic, honourable, kind, empathetic, stable, gregarious but unstuffy. Wealth would be nice. Box 2197.

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TALL SLIM PROFESSIONAL male, mid thirties, urgently needs attractive lady for bodice-ripping passion type activities. Box 6897.

WOMAN, 42, DONE it all before, would like to do most of it again. Box 6997.

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SUCCESSFUL SINGLE businessman/professional, 47, seeks younger, attractive female for whatever. London area. Photo appreciated. Box 8097.

WEALTHY COMPANY director, married but lives in London Monday through Friday — looking for that special lady for dining, wining, theatre. Please write with photo. Box 8197.

NOVELIST/COMPOSER OF some renown, attractive, 46, slim, 5'11", now unattached, longs to meet intelligent, beautiful slim lady (30-40) preferably based in the South East, to enjoy warm, unpressured evenings for dinner and good conversation... and perhaps to love and care for, for the rest of her life. Photograph preferred. Box 8297.

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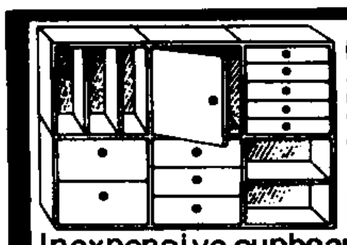
CULTURED GOOD-LOOKING strong articulate lady musician is looking for a funny tender educated tall and sophisticated man with an adventurous mind and possibly a love of Italy. North West/North Midlands or anywhere. Box 8897.

LOTS OF LIFE after 60. N/s F, interests EngLit, theatre, gardening, going places would welcome (& reply to) letters from similar solvent single sixtyish SE chaps. Box 8997.



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ATTRACTIVE LONDON male 30 seeks fun-loving female for candlelit dinners, smooching. Photo please. Box 9397.

30, 5'11", OXBRIDGE, eclectic, handsome, mortal, seeks original, independent, elegant young lady who wouldn't dream of answering ads. Box 9497.

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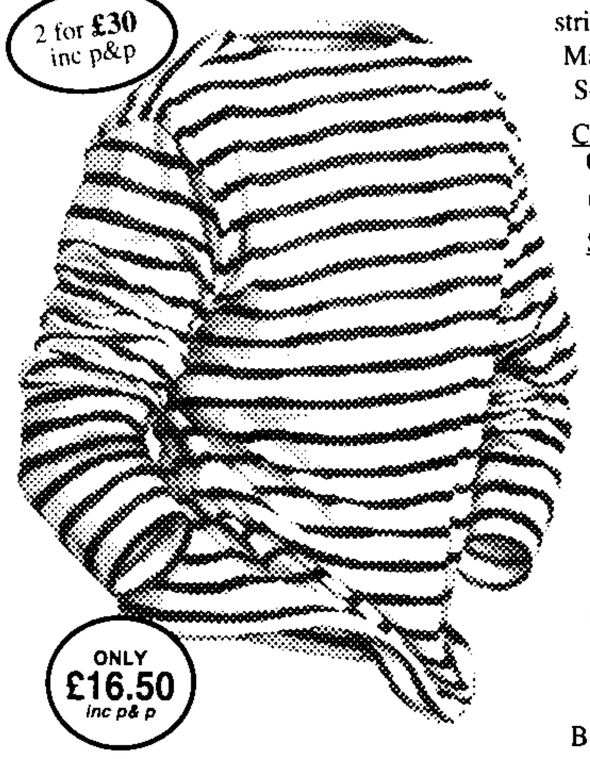

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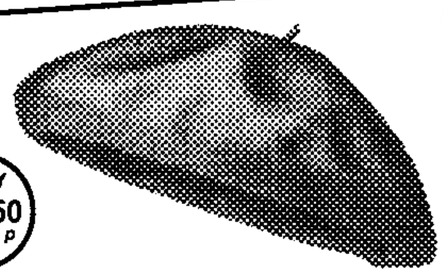

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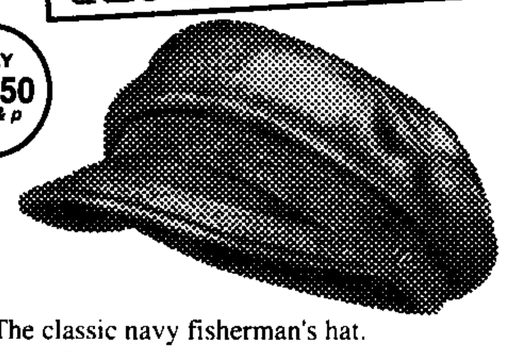

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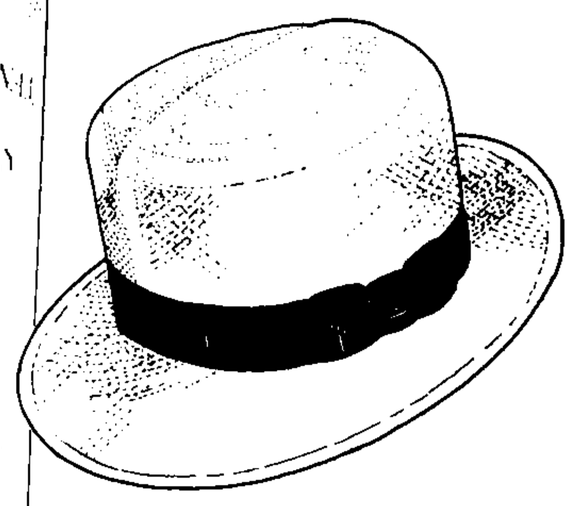

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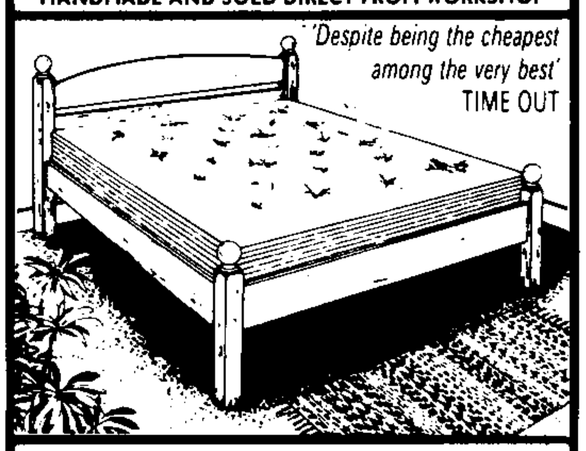

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Published by Pressdram Ltd, 6 Carlisle St, London W1V 5RG. 071-437 4017. Printed by East End Offset Ltd, Empson St, London E3 3LT. Distributed by P.E. Distribution, Mortimer Hse, 230/236 Lavender Hill, London SW11 1LE. 071-223 9971